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Parliament plans

Plans to set up the first ever disabled people's parliament have sparked fears of a new rift within the disabled people's movement.

The British Council of Disabled People (BCODP) has received £50,000 in government funding to set up the body which will consist of 180 unpaid "Members of the Disabled People's Parliament" – or MDPPs.

They will be democratically elected by disabled people in their local areas. BCODP hopes to hold the first elections in June and have the parliament running by October.

BCODP said the parliament would increase the profile of disabled people and encourage more disabled people to get involved in public life.

But other disabled people's organisations say the plans have been poorly thought through and could drain local organisations of talented campaigners.

Reg McLaughlin, chief exec-

utive of Greater London Action on Disability, a BCODP member, said: "There's no clear picture of why this is happening. It needs much more debate. They should be campaigning for comprehensive civil rights. How they achieve that is not by a disabled people's parliament."

He said the lack of debate risked splitting the disabled people's movement.

Anne Begg MP, who is disabled, said getting disabled people's voices heard on disability issues was important, but it was crucial they had a voice in mainstream politics. She questioned how MDPPs would be able to keep in touch with their constituents properly without a salary and with limited funding.

Several campaigners complained BCODP failed to con-

sult widely enough on the plans.

The award of the grant came as BCODP sent out appeals to help ease its current funding crisis. The jobs of five members of staff are at risk if new donors are not found by March, it said.

BCODP chief executive Andy Rickell denied it was the wrong time for the organisation to launch such an ambitious project.

"We've never had a secure funding base but we've still done a lot of good work over the years. There's no wrong time to do the right thing."

BCODP hopes to get government funding to build an accessible conference centre for the parliament and lottery funding to secure its future when the grant runs out.

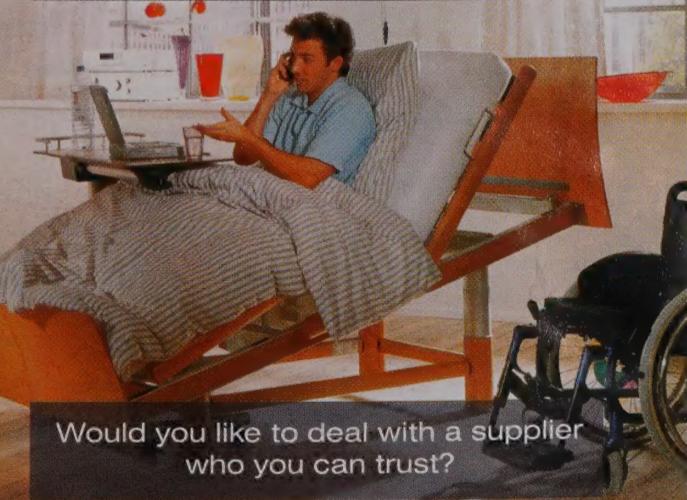
nuala.calvi@scope.org.uk



Bear necessity: Natalie Johnson, 15, a student at the Royal Schools for the Deaf Manchester, raised £75 for Children in Need (CIN) by selling her own Pudsey Bear biscuits. She wanted to thank CIN for giving her school £60,000 to help recruit volunteers.

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Sales shock

A leading industry body has criticised assistive products companies for failing to deal properly with complaints by disabled and older customers.

The British Healthcare Trades Association (BHTA), which has more than 300 members, said the report, based on complaints from 1999 to 2001 and prepared for the Department of Trade and Industry, was "worrying".

Sarah Lepak, assistant director of BHTA, who wrote the *User Complaint Review*, said she was "more disappointed than surprised" at her findings.

Recommendations include an industry-wide code of practice and new procedures for handling complaints, one of the main concerns in the report.

BHTA will also produce an advice leaflet for disabled and elderly people who have bought assistive products.

Concerns raised in the report include "increasing

numbers" of salespeople under "huge pressure" to make sales, "vulnerable" consumers and "outrageous and misleading" claims made for some products.

It also says there is "great confusion" over cancellations and deposits, and delays over spare parts coming from abroad.

Lepak said: "In terms of sales techniques, we have not uncovered that much evidence of malpractice among our own members; but, anecdotally, we hear some terrible stories about other companies.

"People can be very vulnerable to persuasive sales people and really not good at looking at the small print."

Maggie Winchcombe, acting chief executive of the Disabled Living Centres Council, welcomed the report and was planning to discuss it with BHTA.

Age Concern raised similar concerns last year and welcomed plans to improve complaints procedures.

Gulf war double talk

A gulf war veteran has had his army pension released by the Ministry of Defence after doctors diagnosed him with Gulf War Syndrome, even though the government refuses to acknowledge the condition exists.

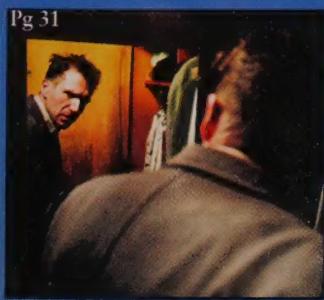
Rev David Peachell was retired from the Church of England due to symptoms including pelvic pain, neurological disease, diabetes and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Defence minister Lord Bach said: "The Church of England doctors called it 'Gulf War illness'. We do not believe that such a syndrome exists."

The pension was paid because "he had many illnesses over a period" and the case "has no implications for others".

Rev Peachell claims he had had health problems ever since returning from the Gulf. "I've been massaged out the back door. I didn't get this from working in a parish in Norfolk."

Contents



News

- Stories 1-9
- Health news 10
- Regional news 11
- News focus 13
- 2003, European Year of Disabled People

Travel 20-27
- Eight pages of trips and tips

Features

- Comment 12
- Andrew Smith on employment
- Profile 14
- Rebecca Macree, squash star
- Comment 17
- Tanni takes on doctors
- Living 28
- Body modification
- Living 29
- Michael Caines, chef

Regulars

- Parent's voice 16
- Letters to the editor 18
- Motoring 30
- Arts 31
- Share your problems 32
- Checkout 33
- Take a break 34
- Information 37-38
- Classified 38-42
- Up for grabs 43

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Pg 21



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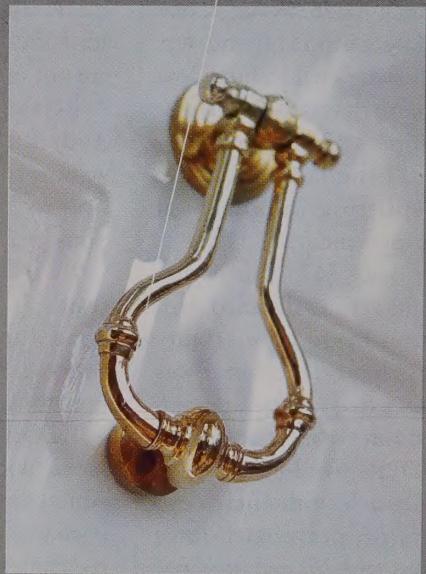
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Exclusive inclusion

bank is paying recruitment agencies huge bonuses to help top posts with women and people from ethnic minorities, it has refused to offer the incentives to find disabled candidates.

Barclays Capital, the investment banking arm of Barclays bank, has decided "ethnicity and gender" are the "most significant issues to deal with", even though disabled people are already under-represented in

senior financial sector jobs.

Peter Purton, the Trades Union Congress's disability policy officer, said the decision was "a shame".

A RADAR spokesperson said: "Employers need to tackle discrimination across the board. Otherwise, they are going to miss out on a lot of high-calibre disabled individuals."

Barclays Capital pays agencies 27.5 per cent of the first year's salary of anyone they hire,

but this will rise to 33 per cent for women or ethnic minorities.

A Barclays Capital spokeswoman could not explain why disabled people have not been included or how many of its staff were disabled.

As a "Gold Card" member of the Employers' Forum on Disability (EFD), Barclays is supposed to help "actively promote the economic and social inclusion of disabled people". The EFD declined to comment.

DN CAMPAIGN



A heated debate

MPs and peers have turned up the heat on the government to end winter fuel payments to elderly disabled people. Liberal Democrat disability spokesman Paul Holmes called an end to "this powerful injustice" in a Commons debate on 11 December.

And as *DN* went to press, Lord Ashley was questioning government in the Lords. Replying to Holmes, Work and Pensions Minister Malcolm Chidgey said that people with severe disabilities already receive "considerable help" and the government was still considering payments should remain targeted at older people.

Andrew Smith, Work and Pensions Secretary, took the next line in a letter to *DN*

editor Mary Wilkinson.

Lorna Reith, chief executive of the Disability Alliance (DA), said: "It should not be forgotten that fuel costs include hot water and the cost of drying clothes indoors. Many disabled adults and children have a high use of hot water."

* DA and the Centre for Research in Social Policy have secured £94,700 from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to research the extra costs of disability. The research is expected to be completed early in 2004. Ask your MP to sign Holmes' new EDM (209), and write to Andrew Smith at Dept for Work and Pensions, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NS, telling him how the cold has affected you over Christmas.

Targets don't tell all

The government has been accused of contradicting its commitment to inclusive education because of its obsession with academic targets.

The comments from charities and education experts follow a report* that children with special needs are being turned away by schools that worry they will hurt their league table position.

Children with emotional and behavioural difficulties are most likely to have admissions problems, followed by those with autistic spectrum disorders and physical and learning difficulties, according to the research.

Disability charity Scope said: "Until there are some real incentives for doing well at inclusion, disabled children will continue to have a less than equal opportunity in education."

* www.audit-commission.gov.uk

LUCY GLYNN



Frozen out: campaigners from Croydon People First joined protesters calling on MPs to introduce a civil rights bill for disabled people. The umbrella group Rights Now wants the Disability Discrimination Act replaced by its Disabled People's Rights and Freedoms Bill.

DN CAMPAIGN



Parking protocol

All police chiefs in England, Wales and Northern Ireland have been advised to remind their officers to only park in disabled parking bays in emergencies.

The advice from Peter Bagshaw, of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), came after *DN* told him about cases in which officers have abused disabled spaces.

Meanwhile, motoring organ-

isation RAC is asking members and breakdown patrols to collect evidence of abuse and good practice.

And Labour MP Laura Moffatt has put down an early day motion (EDM) for MPs to support the Baywatch campaign. So far, 26 MPs have signed.

Write to your MP, asking them to add their name to EDM 211.

In brief

Sobering survey

One in four young disabled people believed they were discriminated against at school, according to new research.

The survey of disabled 16- to 24-year-olds for the Disability Rights Commission also found that more than a third said they were bullied at school.

New bill may help

The government hopes a new bill will "empower and protect" people who cannot make decisions for themselves.

The draft bill will give carers the authority to make decisions about finances, welfare and health on behalf of people with mental incapacity. But they will not be given these powers unless it is proven that an individual cannot make his or her own decisions.

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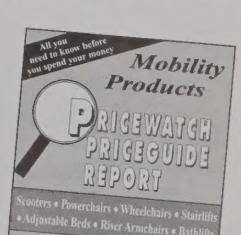
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Bloody disgrace

The government has a moral duty to compensate people with haemophilia who were infected with hepatitis C by NHS blood products, according to a veteran disability rights campaigner.

Lord Morris, president of the Haemophilia Society, told a Lords debate that a group of independent experts – commissioned by the Scottish Executive – had decided it was “morally right” to compensate Scottish people for hepatitis C infection.

He said the same “moral imperative” should apply to the rest of the UK or the NHS would be reduced to “a two-tier, two-class and two-faced system of healthcare”.

More than 2,800 people with haemophilia in the UK are living with hepatitis C after

infection by NHS blood products between 1969 and 1985.

Health minister Lord Hunt said there was “no legal liability to justify compensation for people with haemophilia and hepatitis C” as the NHS had not been negligent. The technology was not available at the time to keep blood products free from hepatitis C, he said.

But Lord Morris told *DN* the government agreed in 1987 to compensate people infected with HIV by NHS contaminated blood without proof of negligence.

The Department of Health said the HIV payments scheme was set up because of “exceptional circumstances”.

A spokeswoman for the Scottish Executive said it had yet to decide on compensation.

Strike hits hard

Disabled people were barred from work and schools because employers and service providers failed to plan for November's eight-day fire strike, it has been claimed.

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) said some organisations were guilty of

introducing “panic measures” that led to the exclusion of disabled people.

One local education authority asked a school for a list of disabled pupils so it could inform parents their children would not be able to attend lessons during the strike.

TV shut out

Blind and partially sighted people have been “massively left behind” by new broadcasting legislation, according to a leading disability charity.

While a target of 90 per cent has been set for subtitling on terrestrial TV, the figure in the Communications Bill is just 10 per cent over 10 years for audio description.

Deaf people’s charities welcomed the tougher stance on subtitling, which will see cable and satellite channels subject to similar regulations as terrestrial broadcasters for the first time.

But the Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB) described the audio description target as “insultingly low” and called for a minimum of 50 per cent.

RNIB parliamentary officer Dan Scorer said the government overlooked the concerns of blind people’s organisations raised in its consultation.

The bill failed to give the new communications watchdog, OFCOM, a duty to promote inclusive design or to set up an advisory committee on disability, he added.

The RNIB hopes the changes will be made before the bill becomes law.

See letters, page 18



Extending herself: Sarah Hamill (left), who is profoundly deaf, accepts the diversity in employment award from Claire Taylor, head of the social exclusion unit, at the British Diversity Awards. Hamill runs Extend, the BBC’s work experience scheme for disabled people.

DN CAMPAIGN



Poll shows promise

Nearly nine in ten people think doctors should be able to prescribe cannabis to relieve “serious illnesses”, according to a new survey.

The National Centre for Social Research’s (NCSR) 19th *British Social Attitudes* report found that 86 per cent of people wanted the government to legalize medicinal cannabis.

More than 80 per cent of people were in favour of the

law change in every age group questioned.

Nina Stratford, NCSR research director, said: “Basically, there is a great majority in all the different groups who think it should be legalised for medicinal purposes.”

Mary Wilkinson, editor of *DN*, said: “The message has clearly got across that cannabis-based drugs can help ease many conditions.”

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New Deal shock

N exclusive by Nuala Calvi

ewly revealed figures show only five per cent of people involved in Labour's flagship disabled employment scheme have found permanent jobs.

The results from July 2001 to September 2002 show only 400 disabled people worked for more than six months after getting help. And just 6,099 people were helped into any form of work – far short of the target of 10,000 jobs in three years.

These figures for the New Deal for Disabled People failed to appear on the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) website, alongside those for other New Deal schemes, due to a "technical hitch".

Catherine A'Bear, communications director at the Shaw Trust, said many voluntary

organisations running the scheme failed to produce significant results because they had put in bids under government guidelines that underestimated the costs involved.

The figures were revealed as a new government consultation paper proposed compulsory work-focused interviews at jobcentres to get more people on incapacity benefit employed.

But A'Bear said voluntary organisations were better prepared to provide disabled people with advice than jobcentres. She called on the government to explain why current schemes appeared to be failing.

Evaluation of recent "ONE programme" pilots, which required claimants to attend employment interviews, showed disabled people were less likely to find work after attending – a

result the government admitted was "not easy to explain".

But A'Bear said it was "actually very simple". "Employment interviews and work placements can't be provided by the same people who are responsible for monitoring disabled people's benefits," she said.

A DWP spokesman said the government was not supplanting voluntary organisations but trying to deliver a better service.

"The ONE pilots showed personal advisers felt they lacked the skills to deal adequately with this client group. All our recommendations address those lessons," he said.

Disability charities welcomed other plans in the consultation paper, such as a £40 per week Return to Work Credit and £300 grants for job searchers (see page 12).



DPR/YAMAHA

Pitch perfect: cornet player Sean Chandler, 14, from Liverpool, has heard himself play for the first time. Sean, who is deaf, previously used vibrations to pitch notes. Now, with the help of a microphone attached to a Yamaha Silent Practice Mute and connected to his headphones, he can hear the notes he plays.

In brief

Autism appeal

Autism Awareness Year* campaigners have called for an end to the "postcode" provision of education, health and social services for people with autism and their carers.

The manifesto, launched at the year's closing national conference, also included requests for money to educate professionals and ring-fenced funding for respite care.

*www.autism-awareness.org.uk

Working it out

Remploy, the UK's largest employer of disabled people, has challenged businesses to double the number of disabled people they employ.

The "Double the Opportunities" campaign – backed by big names like

Sainsbury's, Comet and Tesco – will help employers find, train and support disabled workers.

It will run throughout 2003, the European Year of Disabled People.

The company will be producing monthly factsheets on disability issues during the year.

Stillman goes free

Aid worker Ian Stillman, who is profoundly deaf, has been released from prison in India following a campaign by tens of thousands of supporters, including 230 British MPs.

Stillman, who is diabetic and has one leg, was denied a sign language interpreter or Hindi translator at his trial on drugs charges, which he has always denied.

He was released on 7 December after his health began to deteriorate.

Rail passenger treated 'appallingly'

A wheelchair user claims rail staff repeatedly left him stranded on a train while he waited to be helped onto the platform.

Mervyn Endacott, from Maidstone, said Connex South Eastern failed to arrange for a member of staff with a ramp to help him out of the guard's van on about 30 occasions over the last five years.

He said using Connex's assisted travel service made no difference.

His case comes as the government announced that it was consulting on a proposal to remove transport's exemption from the Disability Discrimination Act.

A spokesman for the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) welcomed the proposal, but was concerned the government had not said when it would legislate.

Connex apologised for the latest problems on Endacott's journey between Maidstone

East and London Victoria and has offered him compensation.

It blamed a breakdown in communications and promised that two separate calls to London Victoria would be made whenever he travels.

A spokeswoman said new carriages, with their own ramps, would replace all the old-style trains by 2004.

Endacott said: "I have been treated appallingly. I feel like a second-class citizen."

Have you got some news? Send it to
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Kids need rule change

A children's charity has called on the government to change the rules for awarding housing grants because it says the system discriminates against disabled children.

The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) provides funding to adapt homes, but only the poorest families qualify for the means-tested grant.

The charity, Homes Fit for Children (HFC), wants the law changed so children can apply for the DFG themselves.

Virginia Shaw, co-chair of the HFC steering group, said chil-

dren were being denied a human right and the government must end "age discrimination".

A government spokeswoman said it couldn't allow children to apply because all of them would qualify for a 100 per cent grant, even if their parents were millionaires.

But Shaw said: "I don't think millionaire parents really want to go to the bother and bureaucracy of applying for the DFG. But if some did, this would be outweighed by the benefits to the disabled children who are currently suffering."

The call comes as new Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) research* shows that 90 per cent of families with a disabled child have had a housing-related problem.

The research also found that families with a disabled child are more likely to live in poorer housing conditions than families on a similar income with a non-disabled child.

*Housing matters: national evidence relating to disabled children and their housing, £13.95, tel: 01235 465500, e-mail: direct.orders@marston.co.uk

Benefits uprating

Main benefits	Now £/week	April 03 £/week
ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE		
Higher rate	56.25	57.20
Lower rate	37.65	38.30
CHILD BENEFIT		
Only, elder (couple)	15.75	16.05
Only elder (lone parent)	17.55	17.55
Each subsequent child	10.55	10.75
DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE		
Care component		
– Highest	56.25	57.20
– Middle	37.65	38.30
– Lowest	14.90	15.15
Mobility component		
– Higher	39.30	39.95
– Lower	14.90	15.15
DISABLED PERSON'S TAX CREDIT		
The support that is currently available through the Disabled Person's Tax Credit will, from April 2003, be available through the new Working Tax and Child Tax credits. The support for disabled workers will increase slightly, but the structure is complicated. DN will explain it in the March issue.		
SEVERE DISABLEMENT ALLOWANCE		
Basic rate	42.85	43.60
Age related addition (from Dec 90)		
– Higher rate	14.90	15.15
– Middle rate	9.50	9.70
– Lower rate	4.75	4.85
INVALID CARE ALLOWANCE		
(Carer's Allowance from April 2003)	42.45	43.15
INCAPACITY BENEFIT		
Long-term Incapacity Benefit	70.95	72.15
Short-term Incapacity Benefit (under pension age)		
– Lower rate	53.50	54.40
– Higher rate	63.25	64.35
Short-term Incapacity Benefit (over pension age)		
– Lower rate	68.05	69.20
– Higher rate	70.95	72.15
RETIREMENT PENSION (A or B)		
	75.50	77.45
STATUTORY SICK PAY		
– Earnings threshold	75.00	77.00
– Standard rate	63.25	64.35
INDUSTRIAL INJURIES DISABLEMENT PENSION		
18 and over, or under 18 with dependants		
– 100%	114.80	116.80
– 20%	22.96	23.36
Under 18		
– 100%	70.35	71.55
– 20%	14.07	14.31
WIDOW'S PENSION		
	75.50	77.45
EARNINGS RULES		
– Invalid Care Allowance/Carer's Allowance	75.00	77.00
– Limit of earnings from Councillor's Allowance	66.00	67.50
– Permitted work earnings limit	66.00	67.50

THANKS TO RADAR FOR PREPARING THE UPGRADING.

Benefits – the gap gets bigger

Disability campaigners have criticised the government for further widening the gap between support for pensioners and for disabled people.

While allowances for disabled people are set to rise in line with inflation in April, retirement pensions will receive an inflation-beating increase for the third consecutive year, making them £5.30 a week higher than long-term incapacity benefits.

Lorna Reith, chief executive of Disability Alliance, said: "We are disappointed that the long-term rate of Incapacity Benefit has fallen yet further behind the state retirement pension. The increase on Incapacity Benefit is 1.7 per cent compared to 2.6 on pensions.

"We see no justification for providing less support to people who are forced to stop work early because of ill health or disability."

Margaret Lavery, social security officer at RADAR, said: "Both payments replace earnings and used to be equal, but the gap which appeared a few years ago is now significant."

DN editor Mary Wilkinson compared these findings to winter fuel payments, for which pensioner households receive £200 and severely disabled people under 60 receive nothing.

"Furthermore, pensioners are getting inflation-busting rises in their personal allowances – whether they need it or not."

Support will be more generous for children and disabled workers from next April, thanks to changes in tax credits.

The new Working Tax and Child Tax credits will also extend support to groups currently not receiving help.



Rights rewards

Disability network RADAR has recognised the achievements of human rights campaigners in its People of the Year awards.

The charity also announced it would now focus more on the promotion of human rights for disabled people, rather than on fighting discrimination.

Director Kate Nash said there were "still too many profound inequities" for disabled people, seven years after the introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act.

She said: "Our new vision is of a society where human difference is routinely anticipated, expertly accommodated and positively celebrated."

Announced by Lord Bragg

on the International Day of Disabled People, the award for furthering human rights of disabled people internationally went to Rachel Hurst, director of Disability Awareness in Action, and the UK award to solicitor David Ruebain.

Campaigner Katie Caryer, pictured above with Lord Bragg (left) and Lord Ashley, was named "most successful newcomer", while actor Matt Fraser and broadcaster Kevin Mulhern shared the award for "excellence in media coverage".

Monica Wilson, chief executive of Disability Action in Northern Ireland, won the Harding award, given to a veteran disability rights campaigner.

Tougher on sex crime

Abusers who commit sex crimes against people with learning disabilities or "mental disorders" will face possible life sentences in prison, under a revamp of outdated sexual offences legislation.

The government confirmed that it will introduce three new laws to improve the protection of vulnerable people from sexual abuse.

The maximum sentence for sexual activity with people with severe learning disabilities or "mental disorders" will increase

from two years to life in prison.

Those who obtain sexual activity with a person with a learning disability or "mental disorder" through bribes or threats will also face a possible life sentence.

And it will become illegal for care workers to engage in sexual activity with such clients.

Kathryn Stone, director of Voice UK, which has campaigned for changes in the law, welcomed the announcement but said the hard part would be proving allegations in court.

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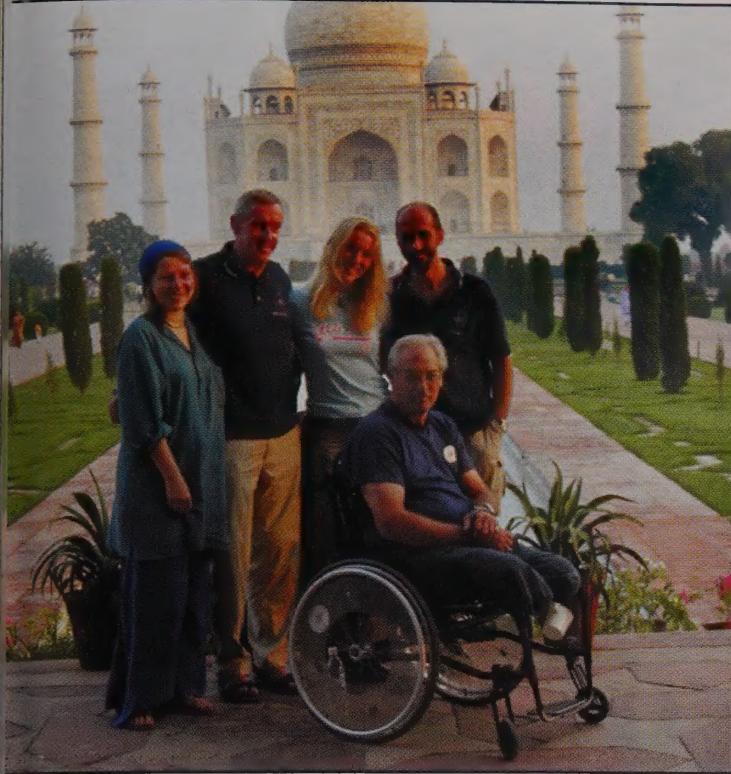
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Around trip: a team of disabled travellers have circled the globe using 10 different forms of transport. Pictured at the Taj Mahal are (from left) journalist Aoife O'Connell, Miles Hilton Barber, who is blind, Caroline Casey, who is visually impaired, team manager Jon Cook and (front) Mike MacKenzie. They returned from their three month trip on 3 December: www.aroundtheworldineightyways.com

Diabetes – discrimination will remain

Disability organisations have warned that the proposed extension of anti-discrimination legislation to cover police, fire and prison services will not end the widespread exclusion of people with diabetes in the workplace.

A new report by the All Party Parliamentary Group for Diabetes found that discrimination at work faced by people with diabetes was "widespread" and employers' practices remained "resolutely inflexible", despite advances in treatment of the condition.

Diabetes UK and the Disability Rights Commission welcomed the government's decision to extend the Disability Discrimination Act.

But they said the proposals would still allow employers to get away with discrimination by arguing that they had "considered" applicants' abilities, even if their assessments were unfair.

Stephen Fishwick, Diabetes UK's national campaigns manager, said: "Employment tribunals cannot currently disagree with a risk assessment, even if they believe the medical evidence relied upon by the employers is wrong. The draft regulations do nothing to tackle this."

Maria Eagle, Minister for Disabled People, said the government was keen to learn from charities during the consultation*.

*www.dti.gov.uk/er/equality/

£1m more for EYDP

The government has received so many bids for European Year of Disabled People cash that it has announced an extra £1m funding.

The first 93 successful projects to promote the year's theme of rights and participation were announced on 3 December, International Day of Disabled People.

They include national schemes to launch a disabled people's parliament, a European multi-disabled football tournament, a teaching guide to raising awareness of disability through film, and a pilot scheme to train workplace disability "champions", each to receive £50,000.

The additional projects, which will bring government funding to £2.3m, were due to be announced by the

Department for Work and Pensions before Christmas.

The European Parliament is giving £550,000 to each participating country, and thousands of events are expected to take place across Europe for the year, the first of its kind.

A campaign bus will tour the EU collecting testimonies from disabled people about their lives and hosting local events. It will be in the UK from 2 June to 2 July.

And the year will be promoted by official postcards designed by European children, including 11-year-old Gareth Evans, from East Lothian, whose card was chosen for the UK. There were 9,000 entries to a competition in which 10 to 15 year-olds were asked what they would like to change for disabled people in 2003.

Meanwhile, 3 December saw events around the country to celebrate the lives of disabled people. Birmingham hosted an all-day showcase of disability history and culture, with displays, exhibitions and a "history wall", for visitors to record their life experiences.

London's mayor Ken Livingstone joined Greater London Action on Disability to unveil London's European year logo at City Hall.

He also announced a disability rights festival in Trafalgar Square in September, which will feature disabled artists and entertainers.

For more information on events happening during the European Year of Disabled People, visit the websites www.disability.gov.uk or www.eydp2003.org

Hate crimes get unequal treatment

The agency responsible for criminal prosecutions in England and Wales says there is no need to clamp down on hate crimes against disabled people, despite issuing a high profile "zero tolerance" statement on homophobic crime.

The Crown Prosecution Service's (CPS) new policy statement on prosecuting cases with a homophobic element includes a pledge to monitor

and improve the way it deals with such cases.

The Attorney General, Lord Goldsmith QC, said it was "a clear message to those who commit such crimes that they will be dealt with firmly under criminal law".

But the CPS told *DN* it had no plans to issue a similar statement on hate crimes against disabled people, despite the crime reduction charity Nacro

(DN, November) reporting that disabled people are four times more likely to be violently assaulted or sexually abused than non-disabled people.

Rachel Hurst, director of Disability Awareness in Action, said much of the crime against disabled people was inspired by hate.

She said: "I would absolutely support their wish to do something about homophobic

crime, but I wish they could also recognise that probably even worse are disablist criminal violence and abuse against disabled people."

But a CPS spokeswoman said: "If anyone has evidence that we are not dealing with crimes against disabled people in a satisfactory manner than we would be very pleased to receive it and look at it seriously."

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Letter from Brussels



We must use the European Year of Disabled People to call for real change, says Richard Howitt

So the European Year of Disabled People 2003 is upon us, with money distributed for events across Britain, amongst hundreds of initiatives calling for equal rights for disabled people throughout the whole of Europe.

But what concrete changes at European level will make a difference in 2004 and beyond? I asked the responsible European Commissioner, Anna Diamantopoulou.

First, after last year's "Barrier Free Europe" decision, an independent expert group has been set up to recommend European action on access to buildings. The Commissioner told me this would lead to a proposal for a new EU law on access to the built environment. A comprehensive audit of the facilities, buildings and employment procedures of the European Parliament is expected to begin in January.

Second, there's a promise of new action on assistive technology to find ways of making specialist equipment more

cheaply and readily available.

And, third, an inventory of existing disability legislation across Europe will go out in an official European communication, so firm proposals on what follows next will be on politicians' tables before the end of 2003. These will be debated in a special European Disabled People's Parliament in the autumn, which we are hosting. It will celebrate ten years of the UN Standard Rules, assess successes and challenges ahead, and identify priorities for future work in a resolution and report, which will have input from all parliamentary committees.

Welcome as the new EU law on employment for disabled people is, the goal for getting people into jobs will not work without parallel measures to combat discrimination in daily life, such as education, housing and transport.

This message needs to be reinforced in all local and national events for the European Year. Please make sure it is heard!

Richard Howitt MEP is president of the European Parliament All-Party Disability Group, e-mail: ep@edf-feph.org



Open day: David Blunkett opens the new HQ, watched by RNIB director-general Professor Ian Bruce

RNIB will axe jobs

The country's largest charity for visually impaired people is set to announce job losses, only weeks after opening a new £8.7m headquarters in London.

Home Secretary David Blunkett marked the occasion by unveiling a plaque at the Royal National Institute of the Blind's (RNIB) head office and services centre in King's Cross, which includes a library, shop and transcription centre.

But his visit came days after it emerged that the charity faces a £5m deficit for 2002-3, caused, it said, by a downturn in the stock market.

Barry Gifford, RNIB's director of finance and resources,

told *DN* that the charity's board of trustees would be meeting in December to discuss likely budget cuts of £5m.

He said: "The redundancies have yet to be worked out, but they will be in some of the support services. Any redundancies are likely to take effect from 1 April."

An announcement on the scale of job losses is due this month.

He also said the charity would be looking to increase income from service users.

Gifford denied the financial problems were caused by the cost of the new headquarters, which he said was covered

by the sale of the charity's previous offices in a more prestigious location.

He said the RNIB had suffered a 15 per cent fall in income from legacies, which last year accounted for more than a third of its income.

An RNIB spokesman said: "For next year's budget, RNIB's priority will be to preserve services for blind people and to make savings elsewhere."

RNIB's funding problems follow the revelation that the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association was hit by a £20m drop in the value of its stock market investments (*DN*, October).

Prejudiced professionals

Prenatal testing of pregnant mothers for genetic conditions reflects widespread discrimination against disabled people in the health service, a leading academic has told a conference.

Dr Tom Shakespeare, outreach director of Policy Ethics and Life Sciences at the University of Newcastle, said many health professionals "hold overt or covert prejudice against disabled people".

He told a conference on protecting disabled children from abuse, organised by disability and abuse consultancy Prodisca: "Many, many health professionals think disability is a real problem and it is the responsibility of pregnant women to avoid it where they can."

"It is influenced by the idea that disabled people do not have good quality of life."

At the same conference, Rachel Hurst, director of Disability Awareness in Action, called for action to tackle the widespread abuse of disabled children.

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Booth backs Scope

Cherie Booth QC has become one of five new patrons of the disability charity Scope.

Booth, a leading human rights lawyer and wife of the Prime Minister, will be the charity's education patron.

She said: "I'll be working with Scope to promote inclusion and protect the needs and

rights of children with cerebral palsy and other conditions."

The other four patrons are GB wheelchair basketball star and TV presenter Ade Adepitan; Professor David Hall, president of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health; and TV presenters Lorraine Kelly and

Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen.

Meanwhile, more than 70 MPs, including Maria Eagle, Minister for Disabled People, attended a House of Commons reception to mark Scope's 50th anniversary.

Guests met some of the disabled people who campaign for Scope and use its services.



Paint ball: Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen meets Nathan Phariss at Scope

News review

A round-up of news in the mainstream media from the last few weeks

Figures shock

Mental health charities called for government action after new statistics showed the number of men compulsorily detained under the Mental Health Act had increased by 40 per cent in the last ten years.

Department of Health figures showed 11,900 men were detained in 2001-02, compared with 8,500 in 1991-92.

MIND said the figures showed people were receiving inadequate care at the start of their illness.

Gulf War denial

A Ministry of Defence report found that Gulf War veterans are not more likely to suffer from neuro-muscular conditions than other servicemen.

The National Gulf Veterans and Families Association dismissed the findings. It said six British Gulf War veterans now had Motor Neurone Disease.

Good work

The disability jobs website jobability.com announced that Ricky Gervais, star of the BBC comedy *The Office*, was to front a cinema advertising campaign to tackle prejudice against disabled workers.

No stopping them

The Disability Rights Commission said the BBC's "Greatest Briton" poll showed disability was no bar to greatness. Three of the top 10 were disabled, it said.

Winston Churchill, who came top, had depression, Princess Diana, who came third, experienced mental health problems, and Nelson, who came ninth, lost an arm in battle.



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NICE guideline grief

Exclusive by Nuala Calvi

Charities have told *DN* that people with serious conditions are not getting the drugs they need, despite the government's drugs advisory body ruling that they are entitled to them.

A group set up by 25 disability charities has warned that the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) is being "made a mockery of" because there is no proper monitoring of how its guidelines are implemented. Once drugs are approved by NICE, health authorities should fund them.

The Patients' Involvement in NICE (PIN) group is calling for a new government agency to monitor how NICE's guidelines are implemented in the NHS.

Imran Sayed, Diabetes UK's policy coordinator, said: "NICE guidelines look lovely

on paper, but don't always happen in practice. Health authorities and Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) don't budget adequately for drugs, then they find they've overspent and start telling GPs to be careful of their budgets."

The National Asthma Campaign said healthcare professionals were facing restrictions from PCTs on provision of asthma inhalers, again contrary to NICE guidelines.

Similar problems have been highlighted by Arthritis Care, which says vital treatments recommended by NICE are failing to reach people with arthritis.

Chief executive William Butler said: "The government pledged that NICE recommendations would be implemented within three months, but feedback from our members makes it clear that this is just not happening. Postcode prescribing persists."

Meanwhile, research published in *The Pharmaceutical Journal* in November found only 76 per cent of health authorities were providing formal funding for Alzheimer's drugs approved by NICE.

And a new survey by mental health charity Rethink showed one in five Primary Care Trusts have yet to realise NICE's decision from June to make modern schizophrenia drugs available.

Neil Betteridge, chair of PIN, said the burden of monitoring NICE guidelines had fallen on voluntary organisations.

"There's nobody else to check NICE is actually making a difference. The Commission for Health Improvement is meant to be responsible, but it doesn't track all the approved treatments and has a very low profile. A much more powerful authority is needed."

Treating rheumatoid arthritis

Charities hope a new parliamentary group on rheumatoid arthritis (RA) can help set standards to treat a condition which has been "left off the government's agenda for too long".

One per cent of the UK population is affected by RA, yet campaigners say most GPs have no training in RA and other musculoskeletal conditions.

And despite an explosion in

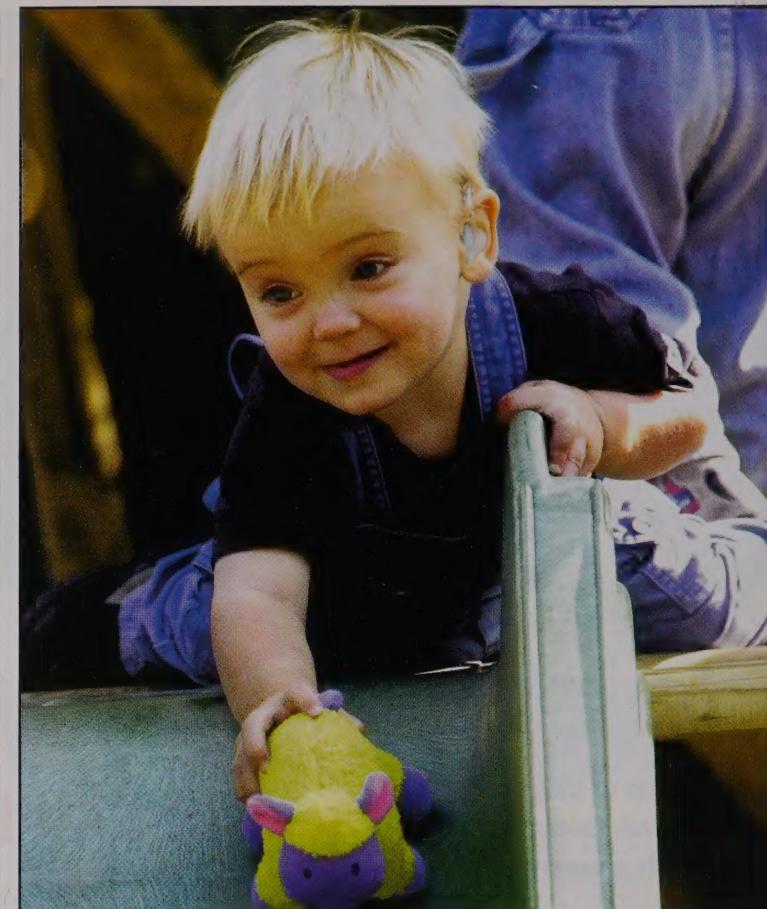
treatments – four new drugs in two years – they say the infrastructure is not in place to administer the drugs.

The National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society is working with other groups to develop guidelines they hope will become part of a framework to treat RA.

Existing problems include a shortage of specialist rheumatology nurses, a lack of

integration between services and postcode prescribing of drugs.

Professor David Scott, a rheumatology expert from King's College Hospital who is working on the guidelines, said: "We're talking about a potential expenditure of hundreds of millions of pounds up from nothing a few years ago with these new treatments, and we need a framework for managing it."



Screen test: Last month, the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) celebrated the first anniversary of a government pilot scheme to screen the hearing of newborn babies. The same technology was used with profoundly deaf Sam Russell (above), now two. NDCS believes all newborn UK babies should be screened by 2004.

In brief

Diabetes review

The Department of Health has published its first review of new research into diabetes.

*Current and Future Research on Diabetes in the UK** covers all recent research on the condition, from stem cell research to patient self-management.

* Visit www.doh.gov.uk/nsf/diabetes/research

Going digital

Digital hearing aids will be made available in 17 more NHS trusts, Health Minister Jacqui Smith has announced.

The trusts will join 50 others already trained and equipped as part of £30m plans to modernise the hearing aid service.

Nearly a third of audiology departments now provide digital hearing aids.

The additional services will be available in a year.



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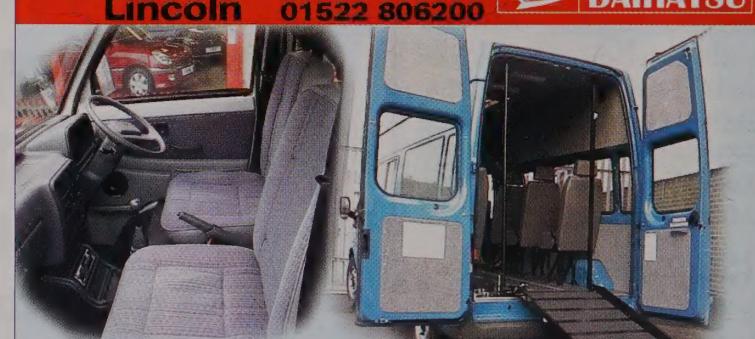
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Centre under threat

A Labour peer has attacked "inhumane" government underfunding that could force the closure of a centre that trains people with brain injuries to return to work.

The Tyne and Wear Brain Injury Centre run by Rehab UK needs 40 trainees to remain financially viable.

But Jobcentre Plus, the government's employment service, is providing enough funding for only 23 places in 2003.

The Newcastle centre may now have to close, as Rehab UK's Manchester centre did in 2001 because of funding.

Last year, Rehab UK lost £1m running its centres, much of which it blames on a shortfall in government funding.

Lord Morris, a vice-president of Rehab UK, said in a speech that Jobcentre Plus's decision was "gratuitously hurtful" and "will make more head-injured young people dependant on long-term institutional care".

A Department for Work and Pensions spokesman said the centre would receive £96,000 in 2003, the same as in 2002.

The money will support just 23 places, whereas in

2002 it funded 30 people.

He said: "We do find it disappointing that the costs per person of providing this service have increased significantly."

But he said Jobcentre Plus would be "flexible if there is significant additional demand".

George Wilson, chairman of Rehab UK, said the charity was only now discovering the true costs of providing the service.

He said training someone with a brain injury to return to work costs £10-£15,000, but it saves £300,000 in benefits and turns a "tax user into a taxpayer".

Scottish cash for diabetes measures

The Scottish Executive has announced an extra £1.55m to improve services for people with diabetes.

It will be used to support the new Scottish Diabetes Framework, which was announced last spring and aims to improve treatment and care.

Measures include improved information, better education and the development of a national screening programme for diabetic retinopathy.

Health Minister Malcolm Chisholm told the Diabetes in Scotland Conference that the number of Scottish people diagnosed with diabetes was rising by 13,000 a year and NHS boards must make it a priority.

Alan McGinlay, spokesman for Diabetes UK in Scotland, said: "This is a good day for people with diabetes in Scotland."

Consultation on Welsh home care

The Welsh Assembly has launched a consultation exercise* on a draft version of its first minimum standards for home care services.

The Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales (CSIW) took on responsibility for regulating social care and independent healthcare settings last April.

Services will have three months from July to register with the CSIW, followed by three months for the inspectorate to decide the applications.

The charity Disability Wales welcomed the consultation.

* www.wales.gov.uk/subisocialpolicy/index.htm

In at the front door

A bank has successfully appealed against a council's refusal to allow it to install a ramp for disabled customers.

Lloyds TSB had applied to Milton Keynes Borough Council for planning permission for the ramp outside a branch in Stony Stratford.

But the council said the ramp would reduce the pavement width and damage the appearance of the Grade Two listed building.

It suggested a side entrance for disabled people down an alleyway.

But the Planning Inspectorate allowed the bank's appeal.

A spokeswoman for the Disability Rights Commission

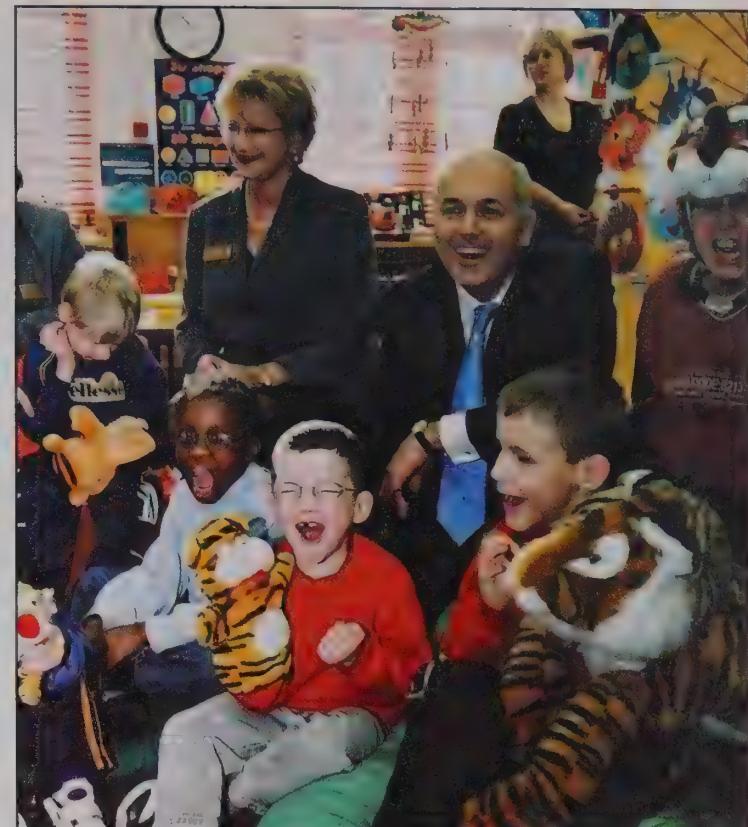
said it was a "victory for common sense".

She added: "Disabled people should be able to use the front door just as any other customer can."

A Lloyds TSB spokesman said it was frequently prevented from fulfilling access obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act because council planners seemed "biased towards preservation at all costs".

A council spokesman said: "The only regret we have is that this issue is being misconstrued as being anti-disabled people."

"We took a planning decision based on planning guidelines."



Story time: Conservative leader Iain Duncan Smith visited Joseph Clarke School in east London to hear how visually impaired pupils are enjoying 100 new story sacks. The sacks use objects to illustrate stories and were bought with a donation from Abbey National.

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Creating pathways to work

Work and Pensions Secretary Andrew Smith outlines proposals that should help people on Incapacity Benefit back into jobs

There are 2.7 million people on Incapacity Benefit (IB), and nearly a million of them have told us that they want to work.

For them to fulfil their aspirations we need to transform our tax and benefit system from one based on what people can't do to one based on what they can do.

Traditionally there has been very little help, support or financial incentive available to help them get a job. But we are changing things for the better.

In November I published a green paper called *Pathways to Work*, which looks at ways of putting people claiming benefit on the pathway to work.

I know many *DN* readers have strong views on this subject, and I'd welcome responses to the document. However, we have thought hard about the proposals and feel that this is the direction we should be moving in.

Everyone who wants to work should have the right to.

Disabled people can face problems on two fronts – discrimination, and lack of access to the practical help they may need.

The Disability Discrimination Act already contains significant protection for people working for larger employers. We will be extending this to all businesses, whatever their size, in October 2004 as well as to a range of occupations such as the police, barristers and partners in business partnerships.

It is important to stress that our new proposals will not force disabled people and those who are ill into work. But most people on IB have the potential to get into work if they are given correct and timely help. Our reforms will provide just that.

Jobseekers will get early support from specially-trained personal advisers, including work-focused interviews and action plans. They will also get access to a range of specialist programmes, including ground-

breaking new rehabilitation services that are being provided jointly by Jobcentre Plus and the NHS.

These programmes will be tailored to people's individual needs, helping them to understand the effects of their condition and working to increase their confidence to move back in to work.

People moving from IB to Jobseekers Allowance will also get more tailored support through the New Deal without the 18-month wait currently stipulated.

Importantly, they will also get greater financial incentives to work. There is already a range of extra help available including Disabled Persons' Tax Credit, which guarantees a weekly income of £167, rising to £189 from next April, for a single person working 30 hours.

On top of that we are piloting a Return to Work credit that will pay people leaving IB £40 a week for 52 weeks, if their personal income

is less than £15,000 a year.

We are also extending access to the Advisers' Discretion Fund, allowing advisers to make discretionary grants of up to £300 on clothes, transportation or anything else that will help their client move into work.

But there's another reason I believe these reforms will work. Employment is currently at record levels and, as reported in last month's *DN*, British business is starting to recognise that it is in its own best interests to recruit disabled people into the workplace.

We want to encourage an environment where as many employers as possible are managing health at work actively and positively, not only because it's the right thing to do but also because it makes good business sense.

I want to entrench the attitude that accommodating people with disabilities should be a normal part of recruitment in a world of diversity. It should not be a token one-off or a special effort for an exceptional person.

Exhorting employers to do more and deploying the



necessary legislation are key elements of change, but it's no less important to celebrate existing examples of good practice.

So, as well as commenting on our proposals, I'd like *DN* readers to give me examples of where enlightened employers have helped to integrate disabled people into the workplace to encourage others to follow suit.

Changes of this magnitude never happen overnight, but they do happen. The green paper is a significant step on the road towards a more inclusive and diverse workplace and for thousands of people it will really help them on the pathway to work.

Full report and summary at www.dwp.gov.uk/publications; summaries are free from Welfare Reform, Freepost (HA4441), Hayes UB3 1BR, tel: 020 8867 3201, text: 020 8867 3217.



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Life in Europe's slow lane

As the European Year of Disabled People begins, Nuala Calvi finds out what EU membership means for disabled citizens

If you are a disabled person in Portugal, you are likely to be living in a flat you can't get out of, unable to use public transport, trapped in long-term unemployment, and surviving on benefits of just 150 euros a month (about £96).

As the European Year of Disabled People kicks off, the experience of being a disabled EU citizen still depends very much on what country you happen to live in.

Scandinavian countries, which have historically had a much greater emphasis on the integration of disabled people, enjoy higher benefits and better access than their central and southern counterparts.

"Access to support and equipment is seen as a right. Personal care schemes have existed for decades that we're still struggling to develop in the UK

"Our schools don't have the resources to educate disabled children; people are dying because the health system doesn't provide minimum levels of care; there are no proper incentives to employ disabled people; and the extent of accessible public transport in our capital city is two adapted vans," he says.

Portugal brought in legislation to guarantee the inclusion of people with disabilities in 1989, but it has never been enforced – a failure Portugal shares with most European countries.

"Sweden and Finland have laws on access to public and private buildings, but they are not enforced. In Italy, there are laws on inclusive education, but it's the same," says Rachel Hurst, director of Disability Awareness in Action, the inter-

'Portugal's schools don't have the resources to educate disabled children; people are dying because the health system doesn't provide minimum levels of care; and the extent of accessible public transport in our capital city is two adapted vans'

through direct payments," says Bert Massie, chair of the UK's Disability Rights Commission.

Elsewhere in Europe, changes in infrastructure, which are crucial if disabled people are to be part of society, are moving very slowly.

"Countries like Portugal and Greece have worse access standards, lower levels of education and of information dissemination, so disabled people are much less aware of their rights and aren't as well organised," says Sophie Beaumont, policy officer at the European Parliament All-Party Disability Group.

"While the rest of Europe is talking about human rights, we're struggling to get through tomorrow," agrees Dr Pedro Grilo, of the Associaçao Portuguesa De Deficientes.

national information network on disability and human rights run by disabled people.

"Rights are no good if they are not enforced. Britain is the only EU country with an enforcement mechanism, through the Disability Rights Commission."

Hurst warns against making generalisations about different regions, because while a country may be advanced in one area, it will fall down in another. Finland, for example, has some of the most accessible public transport, but one of the lowest levels of educational attainment among disabled people.

Considering such inconsistencies, it is not surprising that disabled people's organisations are increasingly looking to the European Parliament to effect change.



Francesca Austini, 11, of Italy, painted this entry for a postcard competition which was part of the European Day of Disabled People, 3 December. "I would like to fly, in order to discover the many far away places I don't know. I would also want disabled people to be able to do the same."

But groups such as The International Disability Alliance, set up to provide a consolidated view at international summits, have been hampered by internal divisions.

"The movement's not as effective as it could be because it wastes time being competitive," says Hurst, who also laments the lack of disabled people within the commission's own disability groups.

"The European Disability Forum, which works with the commission to represent the voice of disabled people, is supposed to have a majority of members from disabled people's own organisations but it doesn't."

It might explain the commission's sluggishness in giving disabled people comprehensive rights, despite gaining the power to pass laws on the subject five years ago.

"So far it has only used its powers to pass laws on employment," says MEP Richard Howitt, president of the All-Party Disability Group. "We're now campaigning for a comprehensive non-discrimination directive, one which would be about getting into the school of your choice,

using the transport of your choice, the pub, cinema or bingo – every aspect of public life.

"Employment and trade may be at the heart of the EU, but an open market relies on consumers, and disabled consumers need rights."

Talk of rights is familiar to Eastern European countries hoping to join the EU in its next round of expansion. Poor treatment of disabled people and other vulnerable groups has been a sticking point in the European Commission's

The European Disability Forum and All-Party Disability Group are in the process of building relations with disability organisations in Eastern European countries, which are being encouraged to get involved with the European Year of Disabled People. But those countries won't be getting a slice of the Commission's funding.

That may not be regarded as a huge loss by some UK campaigners, who are cynical about the year's potential. By

'The movement's not as effective as it could be because it wastes time being competitive'

reports on their progress.

Amnesty International recently revealed the shocking state of psychiatric hospitals in Bulgaria, a country hoping to join the EU in the next five years, where patients have been found chained to walls and dying from neglect.

And disabled people continue to face discrimination in services and suffer degrading treatment in institutions inside countries such as Slovakia and Estonia, which are being welcomed into the EU in 2004.

the end of November, the Department of Work and Pensions had still not provided any information about specific events for 2003.

"We are hoping the European Year of Disabled People will highlight the situation for disabled people and ways in which barriers can be overcome," says Hurst.

"But official 'years' and 'days' have to be seen as just one of a multitude of ways of effecting change. It's the rest of the time that counts."

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The double life of Rebecca Macree

She may be a tough competitor on the squash court, but when she puts her racquet away, another side emerges. John Pring reports

After all the stories I had read about Rebecca Macree, the last thing I wanted to do was turn up late for our interview.

Unfortunately, there was a points failure; my train was delayed, and I had to text ahead to say I would be a few minutes late.

When I finally arrived, it was with some trepidation, fully expecting to have a squash racket wrapped around my head.

But it soon became clear, as we sat talking in a coffee bar in Harlow, that there are two Rebecca Macrees.

There is the on-court version, the aggressively determined, never-say-die, professional squash player, currently ranked ninth in the world, who doesn't always see eye-to-eye with her fellow pros,

'I have tried to be patient and they have tried to be patient with me. We compromise'

calls referees "tossers" and collects their warnings as if they are trophies to place on her mantelpiece.

herself as disabled.

"All I know is my ears aren't working," she says. "I can do anything. My ears aren't

And then there is the outgoing, charming and vivacious off-court version, the one I met, who loves to travel, and enjoys nothing better than sharing a meal with her friends, or shopping with her mum.

As she says: "When I am on court, I have work to do. I have to be professional. When I come off court, I just want to be me, Becky."

Born in Barking, and now living in Walthamstow with David, her partner and coach, Macree, 31, has been playing on the women's professional squash circuit for 14 years.

Her public profile, though, is not nearly as high as one would expect.

After all, she must be the highest ranked disabled star in mainstream sport in Britain, and possibly the world.

Macree, though, doesn't see

working. It's not a big thing."

Her friends don't see her as disabled, either. And she finds it annoying when strangers make a big issue of her deafness.

She lip-reads, and sees her deafness differently to her brother, who is also deaf, uses sign language to communicate and doesn't wear a hearing aid.

"He looks at himself as disabled because he does sign language," says Macree. "He doesn't really talk that much. All his friends do sign language.

"He wants to go that way, but I want to go the other way. He is in the deaf world. I am in the hearing world."

Macree has just returned from a six-week ban imposed on her after calling a referee a "tossie" during a tournament in Singapore.

It led to her missing the World Open in Qatar, the biggest tournament of the year.

It happened, she says, because she had to keep leaving the court to query the score, as she can't hear the referee calling it out.

The referee punished her



Off court: Rebecca, now ranked ninth in the world

by imposing two contact warnings, one of which she didn't know about, because she couldn't hear it being given.

"Of course I called him a tossie. He was a tossie at the time. I am sure they are trying their best to make a decision, but it is not easy for us."

It can be particularly hard for her. After 14 years, most referees on the circuit know by now to use hand gestures to signal rulings during play rather than mutter into their microphones or their beards.

"I have tried to be patient

and they have tried to be patient with me. We compromise," she says.

But, occasionally, she comes up against a ref who isn't so accommodating. "Sometimes I ask for the score and they say get back on court, and I get really cross."

Her manager, Paul Selby, says a first-time spectator wouldn't be able to tell from the way Macree plays that she is deaf.

She takes out her hearing aid before she plays, to stop the sweat short-circuiting the electronics. It means she can't hear her opponents, how hard they hit the ball or how the ball hits the walls and floor of the court.

"I am used to it, but it is still a bit harder because I have to watch the ball. I have to concentrate. After an hour-and-a-half of that, at the end of a match, it's 'leave me alone', because it is really tiring mentally, more than people realise."

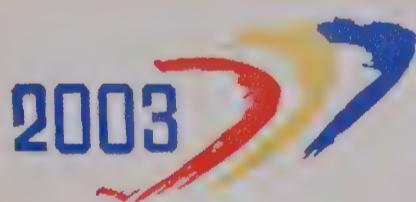
Her target for next year is to reach the top five in the world, which she says is achievable if she builds on her current steady rise through the rankings.

She now works on her fitness for a maximum of two hours a day, mostly through running and weights in the gym.

"Because I am getting older, I can't do three or four hours a day any more," she says.

She doesn't want to look too far ahead. Squash is a tough, fast game which demands extreme levels of fitness, particularly when played at her level.

"I would rather think about now, next month, because anything could happen," she says.



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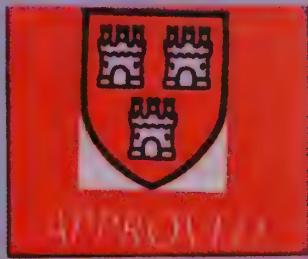
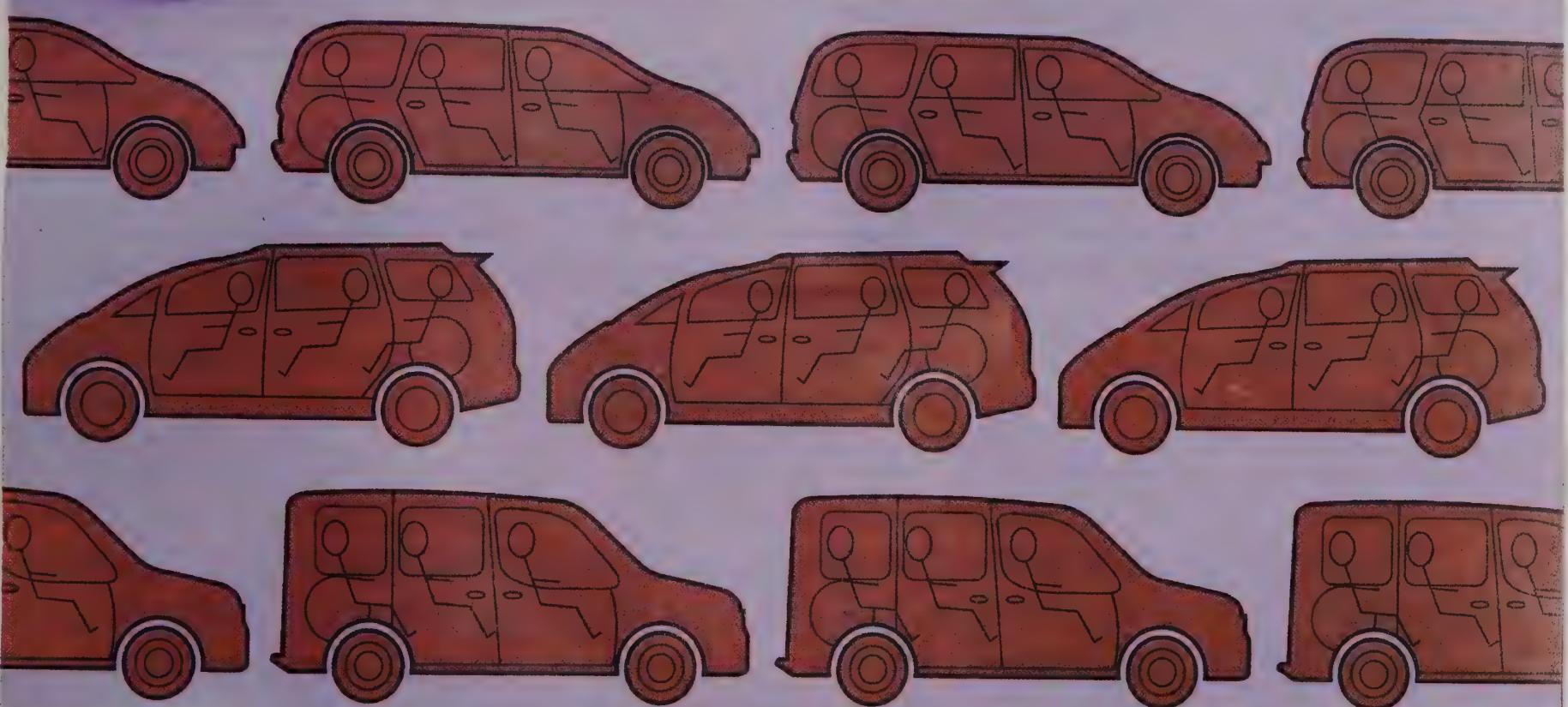
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'The change has been miraculous'

It took desperate measures to improve his father's health, but Shane McKay is now sure he made the right decisions

I have a very unusual relationship with my father, Daniel. How many sons have booked their dad into a psychiatric hospital? Not too many. Yet despite this, our relationship, which has always been close, is stronger now than ever before.

My older brother has a severe form of Huntington's disease. He is 31. Huntington's is a degenerative, genetic illness similar to Parkinson's disease. It is a hateful illness because it destroys not only the person's mind and body, but families as well.

'I understand why this once loving, supportive, caring father turned into a frail old man who never left the house and who stared into space for hours'

My brother left school a perfectly normal 16-year-old. A few years later, he was taken into hospital for tests after developing a slight shake in his hands and an occasional jerk in his legs. He was diagnosed with juvenile Huntington's. He now needs 24-hour care.

My father and I have a milder form of Huntington's. He is twice as old as I am so he has the symptoms twice as badly. His mind and body are riddled with it. He hasn't worked in over a decade. Some days he has trouble walking. Other days he just sits and stares into space with a look of severe pain on his face. Not physical pain but mental torment. It is terrible to sit and watch him.

The pain he feels is a combination of many things built up over many years: guilt over his oldest son's terminal

illness, guilt at the fact that the illness has come from his side of the family, coping with his own illness and mine, and not being able to provide financially for his family.

I understand why this once loving, supportive, caring father turned into a frail old man who

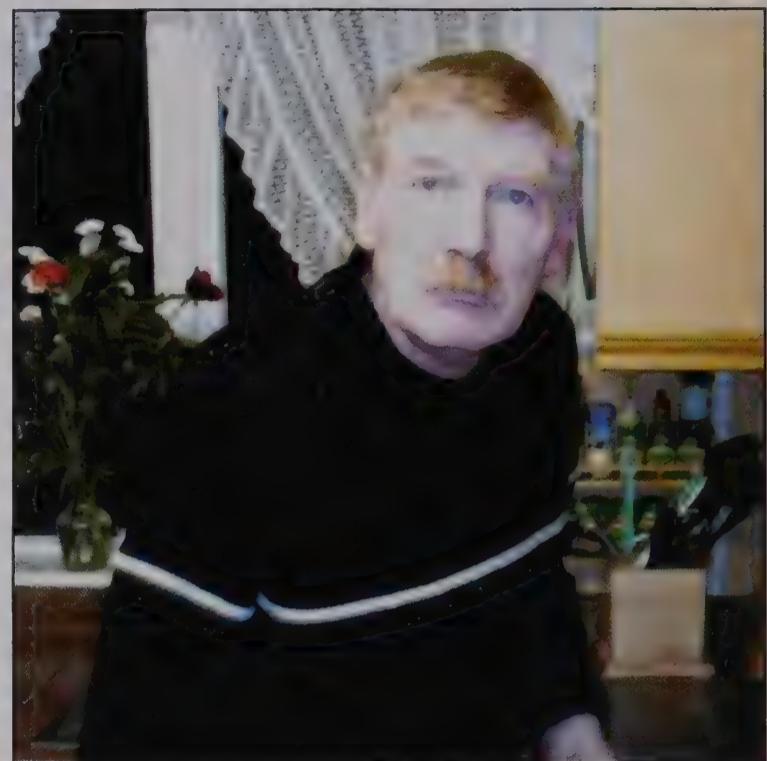


never left the house and who stared into space for hours.

His mood was so bad one weekend that we had to call out a doctor and have him referred to hospital. He was found shouting and trying to get out through a bedroom window to a group of small children playing outside our house.

The episode was incredibly upsetting for the whole family. My older brother witnessed the whole event and began to have fits. My mother was in a terrible state as well. She was in floods of tears.

I drove my father down to the hospital. Before I left our house, my mother told me not to let him come home. As I drove, I had to put my emotions to one side: this was my father; this was his mental



Family affair: Shane (left) and his father Daniel (above)

state; this would be me in a few years' time. I had to be cold and hard to get him help.

At the hospital, I told the doctor about his behaviour and about my mother wanting him to stay in and get professional psychiatric help. My father did not want to stay, but the doctor convinced him that it was for his own good.

I settled him into a general admissions ward late that night, but the admissions doctor told me he would be moved to their psychiatric ward once a bed became available for full assessment. As I drove home, a massive feeling of relief surged through me.

Two days later, my father

I drove him down and settled him in. I told him that he needed to get help. He promised that he would stay this time until a full assessment was carried out and he did.

The change in him has been nothing short of miraculous. Before he went in he drank three bottles of vodka a week, smoked 40 cigarettes a day and took eight aspirin and two anti-depressants every day.

He never touches alcohol or aspirin now. His consultant has reduced his anti-depressant dosage way down. If only we could get him to stop smoking! No chance.

He is starting to enjoy life again for the first time in a decade. He goes out with my mother and he has started to go away on respite breaks with her. The atmosphere in the house is a million times better

'He is starting to enjoy life again for the first time in a decade. He goes out with my mother and he has started to go away on respite breaks with her. The atmosphere in the house is a million times better'

checked himself out of hospital and came home without seeing a single psychiatrist. When he came home he was very apologetic. My mother and I were really upset with him. She warned him that she had been in touch with a consultant psychiatrist and he had told her to phone if he played up again. The consultant would find him a bed immediately in his psychiatric unit.

His mood and behaviour gradually deteriorated again over the next few weeks until we found ourselves back at square one, with him shouting at the kids outside again. My mother phoned the consultant and he told her to bring him in immediately.

mother at weekends and he has started to go away on respite breaks with her. He never did before. They go down to the coast for a few days. The atmosphere in the house is a million times better.

My father now goes to a day centre twice a week. He loves it there. He loves the social aspect of it. He chats away to the other men about football and horse racing. The rest of us love it as well – peace and quiet!

A community nurse comes out twice a week and gives the family professional support.

I hated having to put my father into a psychiatric ward, but it has certainly paid off. The future is looking much brighter.

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'Never let yourself be fobbed off'

Do doctors treat disabled people differently? For Tanni Grey-Thompson's friends, the answer is a resounding "yes"

When will the medical profession stop using disabled people as some form of experiment to treat or not treat at their will?

When a good friend came to watch me at the Commonwealth Games this summer, she fell out of her chair and ended up breaking her legs. At one point, she was told something along the lines of her not needing her legs in plaster because she didn't really use them.

This was bad enough, but the hospital appeared quite

eventually off (after months rather than weeks) her physiotherapy entitlement is 15 minutes per week. So it should only take a couple of years for that to work so that she can bend her legs and be able to get back into her own chair.

I feel frustrated for my friend because any time she has tried to get answers to her medical questions she seems to be fobbed off. Worse than this, she feels patronised and thinks she is being treated differently because she is a wheelchair user.

I asked other disabled

'At one point, she was told something along the lines of her not really needing her legs in plasters because she didn't really use them. The hospital appeared quite happy to send her home without any concerns about how she would be able to look after herself'

happy to send her home without any concerns about how she would be able to look after herself, return to work or generally live her life.

Now that the plasters are

friends whether they thought this was a common occurrence and the answer was a resounding "yes".

But there was also a belief that such attitudes from the



medical profession were more likely to affect certain groups of disabled people and that the situation had actually got better over the years.

I have to be honest and say that I have been really lucky with the medical profession. I have had some amazing doctors who have treated me with respect and dignity and always asked my opinion on any treatment that I potentially had to undergo.

Sure, when I was young, I lost track of the hours I spent in the spina bifida clinic waiting to

be prodded, poked, discussed and almost dissected as if I was some sort of lab experiment.

But I was also consulted about any proposed changes to my regimes, and only once did a doctor try to do something unnecessary.

the operation that was offered to me over 20 years ago has been recently touted on the radio as a pioneering procedure from Russia which will revolutionise the lives of people with different length legs! So what were they going to do to me?

'I lost track of the hours I spent waiting to be prodded, poked, discussed as if I was some sort of lab experiment'

He felt that he could take some bone out of one leg, insert it into the other and, after six months on traction and in plasters, the treatment would be complete. As a naïve young person, I asked if I would be able to walk. I was told "no", but at least my legs would be the same length. Not a big selling point really.

How much has such treatment been experimentation for the individual versus experimentation for the greater good of "medicine"? I guess we will never really know.

But what I do know is that

When I was pregnant, Ian and I made a fairly tough decision on my medical treatment, which meant me returning to my home in Cardiff to ensure that all my records were in one place and that there was some co-ordination of the services that I was likely to need. Because I work there and live there most of the week I was lucky that I was able to do that. Not everyone is in that position.

Decisions about your health are important. My advice is to keep asking questions and never let yourself be fobbed off.

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Victory for deaf people

The RNID is delighted that the Communications Bill proposes to extend current subtitling and signing legislation to digital cable and satellite television so that all broadcasters will come under the same regulatory framework. It is nonsensical that different forms of television have been governed by different legislation for so long.

Although there is still progress to be made, the Bill in its current form is a real victory for deaf and hard of hearing people.

Blue badge

Trevor Kent (DN December) wanted a duplicate blue badge.

The badge actually belongs to his son, Warwick, and not to a vehicle. If Warwick keeps the badge himself, he can put it in any car in which he is travelling. Simple!

Judith Oliver
Chief executive
Disability Action Yorkshire
Harrogate

You quote the Deaf Broadcasting Council (DN December) as saying "Sign language can now be transmitted in closed format through a set-top box." This is not the case. The technology is still some years away.

RNID is in a consortium that is developing a virtual signer, but this will need much development before it can be used for closed signing on tv. Lisa Watch
Parliamentary officer, RNID
London EC1

Two into one will go

Stanley Nevill says he could not fit a C54 NHS wheelchair in a Ford Fusion's boot without snagging the rear door (DN December).

I was referring to fully folded wheelchairs, of course. To ease any problem, the backs of the rear seats could also be folded down to give more loading space.

Mike Rogers
Berkhamsted, Herts

Parking appeals made accessible

May I assure readers that Mr Budgen's unfortunate experience when attending his parking appeal in Maidstone (DN November) was not typical of the service the National Parking Adjudication Services (NPAS) seeks to provide.

Mr Budgen is due an unqualified apology.

In a survey of all hearing venues used by the NPAS, the Archbishop's Palace in Maidstone had been identified as unsuitable and arrangements had been made to view alternatives the very day of Mr Budgen's hearing. We asked his views and by the end of the day we had found an accessible venue.

I hope this underlines our commitment to ensuring that access to justice is available to all. Our new website is at www.parking-appeals.gov.uk

Andrew Pulham
Service Development Manager
NPAS, Manchester

Excluding disabled children from school

MP Tim Boswell argues (DN November) that schools are in the best position to make a judgement on the exclusion of a pupil.

The Disability Rights Commission has no mandate to comment on policies concerning non-disabled pupils. However, a recent Audit Commission report highlighted that, in England, children with statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) are three times more likely to be permanently excluded from school than other children and that an underlying factor was schools' desire to keep league table results high.

Although this is disputed by head teachers, who say the problem is the lack of resources to cope with children with SEN, it is vital for those caught in the middle – the parents and the child – that any decision to exclude a child can be appealed via an independent authority, as in the current system, to achieve a non-biased and non-prejudicial solution that both sides can have faith in.

We would urge the Department for Education and Skills and LEAs to ensure that the exclusion appeals panels understand and utilise the new rights within the Disability Discrimination Act.

Bert Massie
Chairman, Disability Rights Commission
London WC1

Your article (DN November) on Conservative proposals to abolish the current appeals mechanism for schools exclusions was well wide of the mark. We support the recent extension of the Disability Discrimination Act to education and have no intention of reversing it either in substance or effect.

Our proposals are addressed to a school's powers to make judgements on the facts leading to a decision to exclude on the grounds that a pupil's continuing presence is damaging the education (or safety) of other pupils.

As a public official, in deciding to exclude, a head has to follow proper process including being ready to listen to evidence and representations and to avoid prejudice. No head could properly exclude simply on the basis of disability.

We proposed to provide an appeal mechanism through the LEA to hear any complaints from parents of excluded children that due process has not been followed.

Tim Boswell MP
Shadow spokesperson on disability
House of Commons, London SW1

PC pulse

by Dan Batten

Lift rift

Wheelchair user Ann Bates took a two-hour round trip on her way to a meeting to advise rail bosses on facilities for disabled passengers. The trip out to Luton Airport and back wasn't to get Ann to and from her meeting venue, but to get her from the northbound to the southbound platform at Ann's destination, City Thameslink station. The reason? The lift had broken down, so Ann couldn't leave the station. What a pity the bogs Ann was meeting didn't meet her at the station. She could have put them on the right track there and then.



John Humphreys of BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme couldn't believe such a thing could happen. "You would think all stations would be accessible," he mused. You don't know the half of what we come up against, John.

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DN kicks off the new year with a three-month holiday special

A matter of life and breath

We all need air, but as Dan Batten found, if you need oxygen on holiday, it's crucial to plan ahead

David Macnab wrote to DN earlier this year: "I have chronic asthma and require oxygen, when the need arises, to maintain a reasonable standard of life. At Christmas 2001, my 18-year old daughter gave my wife and I her savings of £400 so we could have a holiday abroad. We thought the major travel companies would be able to help us. We were wrong. So we tried the specialist disabled travel companies. It's OK if you use a wheelchair, but if you require oxygen – that's a different matter".

David challenged us to find out more.

A spokesperson for Holiday Care, a charity for disabled travellers, said they receive

around 200 requests a year about travelling with oxygen.

Be prepared for a long haul on information. When we approached a selection of airlines, staff usually had no basic information to hand. Qantas took almost an hour to answer our three simple questions (see table, right).

Easyjet, who proved extremely difficult to contact by phone, and had nothing about oxygen on their website, allows you take your own canister on board, providing it is disposable. But none of the other airlines we contacted allow that, although you can put an empty one in the hold to refill at your destination.

You would think the airlines

The Holiday Care information pack on travelling with oxygen at home and abroad includes oxygen suppliers. Tel: 0845 124 9971, www.holidaycare.org

The British Lung Foundation's *Going on Holiday with a Lung Condition* gives advice, travel options and airline policies on carrying oxygen. Tel: 020 7831 5831, www.lunguk.org

TravelMed International, www.tmassist.com

Medical Travel Inc, www.medicaltravel.org



would have a standard policy, but each operates differently. What most have in common is a charge for the privilege of breathing on board. The price varies and some, such as KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and Alitalia, don't have fixed prices. Virgin Atlantic is the only airline we've found that provides oxygen free, if you tell them you need it when you book.

While airlines can generally sort out your needs with a few days' notice, if you are a frequent flyer with a particular airline, it makes sense to put an automatic arrangement in place. Two systems are now available through most airlines. They both keep a record of a passenger's medical information and needs.

FREMEC (Frequent Travellers' Medical Card), is for

Airline	Provision	Cost	Notification
Air Canada	Yes	£41 each way	48 hours
Air France	Yes	£120*	At least 48 hours
Alitalia	Yes	Variable**	At least 48 hours
British Airways	Yes	£100 per flight	48 hours
Easy Jet	No‡	N/A	"As soon as possible"
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines	Yes	Variable† starts at £100	At least 48 hours
Qantas	Yes	£100 per canister	7 days
Ryanair	Yes	£100 (single or round trip)	Minimum 3 days
United Airlines	Yes	£50**	48 hours
Virgin Atlantic	Yes	No charge	48 hours

Fees for Air Canada are based on Canadian dollars. Air France fees are based on euros. United Airlines fees are based on US dollars. British pound amount approximate.

* Domestic flights within France charge fee of 92 euros (£60)

**Passengers must purchase a full economy fare for the oxygen

‡ Passengers are allowed to bring up to 45 litres of their own oxygen, provided it is in a disposable container

† The charge is dependent on the amount of oxygen a passenger requires, as assessed from the medical clearance form.

regular travellers who have a permanent disability that is not likely to change. You can use your FREMEC on every flight with the issuing airline, but you will need to check if it is valid when flying with another airline.

MEDIF (Standard Medical Form) comes in two parts. The first details any needs you have. The second has to be filled in by your doctor if the airline insists on medical clearance.

Unlike the FREMEC, the MEDIF can only be used on the flights and dates shown on your tickets. If you change your journey in any way, you'll have to get a new MEDIF issued.

Once you reach your destination, you are virtually on your own.

Richard Thompson of Accessible Travel and Leisure says: "In Europe, a local clinic or health centre may supply you if you have taken an E111 medical form, which is available from post offices. This will reduce costs.

"Tour operators may be reluctant to get involved, so it can be up to the individual to do some investigating," he adds.

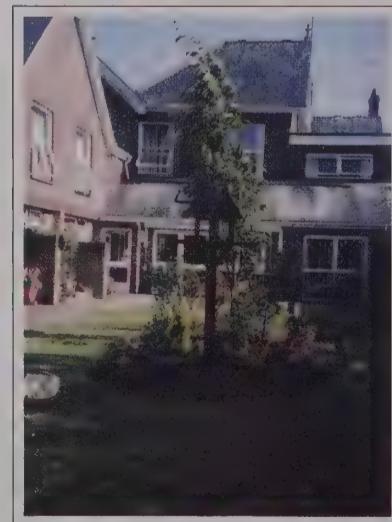
The UK has reciprocal health care agreements with countries outside the European Economic Area who can provide urgent medical treatment at reduced costs, or sometimes free. They are listed in the Department of Health leaflet T6, *Health Advice for Travellers*.

You could also approach an oxygen supplier. Two of these, TravelMed International and Medical Travel Inc, are based in America and offer oxygen "virtually anywhere". Beware though, they can prove very expensive, with prices based on your itinerary.

Our research on oxygen and travel reveals that most operators don't have much idea, and most airlines have a long way to go. Although help is out there, you should be prepared to take a sharp intake of breath and wade through a lot of hot air.

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LIBBY CROSS

On the waterfront: stay local and visit the beautiful, redeveloped St Julian's Bay



Shopper's delight: the centre of Valletta (above), great for gifts; Libby (below) chills out at the hotel

Maltese magic

Libby Cross enjoys a relaxing week of sightseeing and sun

After a hectic few months at work, I was really looking forward to getting away from it all. I'd wanted to go to Malta for ages, drawn by its history, its close links with Britain and, last but not least, its climate.

So in September, I and my friend Wendy booked a week's holiday in the resort of St Julian's at the Golden Tulip Vivaldi Hotel, which made for a luxurious and wheelchair-accessible base.

Malta is a small island, 90 miles south of Sicily and 200 miles north of the African coast. It's blessed by a warm, dry climate and an ever-present sea breeze, which attracts holiday makers all year round.

The language, architecture and culture are strongly influenced by both Latin and Arabic neighbours, and the Maltese are proud of their links with Britain as the former colonial power. English and Maltese are spoken by everyone.

As you'd expect on a Mediterranean island, fish and pasta play an important part in the cuisine; restaurants are small and intimate – most offer a vegetarian selection and there are some delightful local wines.

On our first morning, Wendy and I were eager to do some exploring, but as we left the hotel, we discovered that getting about was not going to be easy.

The hotel was situated in an area which has yet to be modernised at all – kerbs are huge, pavements and roads badly pot-holed, and not a ramp in sight.

This turned out to be the

norm; Malta is struggling to modernise before joining the European Union in 2004. The Maltese are apologetic about the lack of facilities for disabled people and were concerned that this would spoil our holiday. It did mean for me, as a wheelchair user, that many historical sites were out of bounds, but fortunately we were able to travel to the capital, Valletta, thanks to an accessible taxi service run by Connie Camilleri, herself a wheelchair user.

Connie set up the taxi service eight years ago with the help of the Maltese Foundation for Independent Living. She provides a lifeline to the tiny minority of disabled people who have jobs, taking them to and from their places of work. Connie told me the taxi service is an important part of the Maltese disability rights movement, giving disabled people independence and a sense of involvement in their society. She hopes that joining

Libby Cross booked her holiday with **Accessible Travel and Leisure**, tel 0870 241 6127, www.accessibletravel.co.uk. The **Golden Tulip Vivaldi Hotel** in St Julian's, Dragonara Road STJ 06, St. Julian's Malta, tel: +356 21 378 100. Get information from the helpdesk of **Malta's Commission for Disabled People**, e-mail: helpdesk@knpd.org. Connie Camilleri's accessible taxi service, tel +356 21 442 638.

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the EU will speed up the integration process.

Valletta is Malta's main port and has a huge harbour, overlooked by massive ramparts that have protected the island for hundreds of years. From Upper Barracca Gardens, you have a breathtaking view of the harbour and much of the city itself, its sandy-coloured, flat-roofed buildings reminiscent of Moorish architecture.

Valletta offers great gift shopping opportunities in a central pedestrianised area, in which museums and the former royal palace nestle shoulder to shoulder with apartments and market stalls. The central tourist information office can provide you with details of accessible toilets in the city.

Unfortunately, wheelchair-accessible facilities are still few and far between. Near our hotel we discovered the shopping and entertainment complex of Bay Street, with excellent disabled facilities, and the beautifully re-

developed area of St Julian's Bay. But these were exceptions.

It would be difficult for an unaccompanied wheelchair user to make the best of a holiday in Malta, unless you are happy to spend time – as we did – sunbathing and doing some local exploration.

However, if you are more mobile, Malta offers great sightseeing opportunities and, given people's determination to improve facilities, I'm sure the island will soon become a much more amenable destination for disabled holiday makers.



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Rocky mountain high

© Parks Canada

Go Yoho: the British Rapids keep moving in Lake O'Hara at Yoho National Park (above)

Last year Phil Friend and his family had the holiday of a lifetime, travelling through the stunning Canadian countryside

What comes to mind when I say Mounties, forests, the Rockies, wilderness and bears? Canada of course!

For many years my family and I had dreamed of having a motor home holiday in the Canadian Rockies. In 2001 we

booked one through a British-based company, Byways Travel. The company arranged all flights through Air Canada, departing Heathrow, arriving in Calgary.

The flight lasted a little over nine hours, a long time if you're a wheelchair user and unable to

access the toilet – so be prepared! Boarding and disembarking the aircraft was trouble-free and it was a great relief to find my wheelchair still in one piece!

We were met by Sidney and Andrew, the "Wagon Masters", and were introduced to the 13 other families/couples who were also

taking part in the trip.

After a one-night stopover we were taken by accessible hotel bus to collect our motor home, or RV (recreational vehicle)

cle) as they are known.

The RV measured 30ft long by 7ft wide. Equipment included cooker, fridge/freezer, shower unit, a full-sized double-bed, air-conditioning and CB radio – not forgetting the axe. (This was vital for chopping up wood for B-B-Qs on wilderness sites!) The vehicle was fitted with push/pull hand controls which took a little getting used to as they were slightly different from the system used in the UK.

Sadly, a company that used to provide fully wheelchair-accessible RVs is no longer trading, so you need to be fairly mobile on crutches or your bottom to get round the inaccessibility.

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Home sweet home: the motorhomes make a stop at a glacier between the mountains

PHIL FRIEND



Bear witness: black bears cause "bear jams" as drivers watch them



A welcome break: Phil's wife Susan chats to Wagon Master Andrew

such a large vehicle, we drove through some of the most spectacular scenery anywhere in the world. Our route took us through the Banff National Park, the Yoho and Jasper National Parks, the Athabasca Glacier, past Mount Robson,

the highest mountain in Canada, and the Harrison Hot Springs and on to Vancouver Island. We travelled a little over 1,200 miles in 15 days but mostly at a very easy pace.

For me the highlights included traversing the 7,000

foot high Athabasca Glacier in a huge, eight-wheeled transporter built for the purpose. The vehicle – one of only eight in the world – has a wheelchair lift, which meant that I was able to experience the same fantastic scenery and extreme cold as my family. It seemed a little ironic that I could do this in the Canadian Rockies, when my local pub is not wheelchair accessible.

Whalewatching off the coast of Vancouver Island was exciting, especially as this involved jumping my wheelchair off a moving jetty into a small moving boat! Seeing whales swimming in their natural surroundings is very special. However, if you're likely to get sea sick you might want to give it a miss. Fortunately my wife and I were fine, but the children went an interesting colour.

While driving close to Clearwater Lake we spotted a black bear by the roadside cleaning and feeding. For all of ten minutes this beautiful animal entertained us along with lots of other drivers. So many in fact that it created what the Canadians call a "bear jam".

The trip was not without its problems. While shuffling around on the floor of the motorhome I managed to slip and cut my eyebrow so deeply that it required stitches. The Canadian medical system was impressive and the treatment I

received first class. Within minutes of arriving at the hospital, which lacked a casualty department, I was examined, stitched and on my way, although 500 dollars the poorer. The stitches were removed seven days later for a further 50 dollars at a doctor's surgery and now you'd be lucky to spot the scar. (Most of the costs were recovered through insurance on returning to the UK.)

Overall, I remember the trip for the scenery; the sheer size and grandeur of the country; the remoteness – you could drive for a day and not see a house; the accessibility. Wherever we went wheelchair access had been thought about – cable cars, cafés, buses and tourist attractions

were all accessible.

Finally – how impressive is this? We stayed on a wilderness site on one occasion miles from anywhere, just trees, lakes, trees and more trees. While out for a walk, we came across a fully accessible "thunderbox", the Canadian name for a wilderness toilet. Need I say more? Prices on a 15 day holiday range from £635 to £1,495. For more information about Byways Travel, tel: 01428 604 733, visit the website at <http://www.motorhomes.co.uk/freedom.html>, or e-mail: info@motorhomes.co.uk

High there! Phil with the huge transporter (also below left) that took them across the Athabasca Glacier



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On group holidays, you can meet new people and develop new interests. But you should know what you're getting into. On these two pages, *DN* hears some stories and offers some suggestions

Florida fiasco

Michael Morgan got less than he bargained for when he booked a group holiday. Here, he lets off steam, and the charity responds

It should have been the holiday of a lifetime: two weeks in southern Florida at three separate locations. From Fort Lauderdale, "the Venice of America", with 23 miles of uninterrupted beaches and a network of waterways, we would go to Miami with its beaches and bays – South Beach, Biscayne Bay – and Coconut Grove, and finally to Key West, home to Hemingway, Robert Frost and the irreplaceable Sloppy Joe's Bar.



Don't let the smiles fool you: Michael and his girlfriend in Florida

But our transatlantic trip became an unforgettable experience for all the wrong reasons.

The main issue facing me and my girlfriend on holiday is that we both have Friedreich's ataxia, now in a fairly advanced stage. This means we both need a high level of care to go away together. Holiday organisers like the Winged Fellowship Trust (WFT) seem to be our best bet because of the one-to-one care they provide.

We had been on a WFT holiday to Berlin in 2001 and found it very well organised. So our expectations for the Florida trip were high. Although I gagged at the price tag (£4,200 each), I shut my eyes and signed the cheque.

Certainly, there were good parts to the holiday. My favourite was the oddly named organisation Shake-A-Leg, whose mission was to help "challenged individuals" (disabled people to you and me) learn to sail in one of the specially adapted sailing boats, or take the rudder with specialised teachers. But these good parts tended to be outweighed by the negative aspects. Financially and organisationally, we thought the holiday cut a poor deal.

We stayed in three hotels, two of which seemed more like motels. Their bedrooms were comfortable, but there were no dining rooms, bars or public spaces and there was an off-season feel to them – our trip was in the hurricane season.

Transatlantic air travel is relatively cheap these days, and even lower, I would have

WFT responds

We are very sorry to hear that Mr Morgan felt he had a disappointing holiday in Florida, especially as he had booked this second break on the strength of a previous holiday he had with us in Berlin.

Winged Fellowship Trust is one of the few organisations that provides overseas holidays for disabled people, using a combination of 24-hour on-call nursing care, volunteer support and a programme of leisure activities. We have offered this subsidised service for over ten years and cater for a wide range of disabilities, particularly those which have intensive care needs.

We were very surprised to learn of Mr Morgan's complaint – not least because

thought, for the sort of block bookings the holiday organisers would have made months in advance. The cost of the holiday ate up my entire savings. At such a whopping price, where had all our money gone?

'The good parts tended to be outweighed by the negative aspects. Financially and organisationally, we thought the holiday cut a poor deal'

With group holidays, there is little room for individual choice, and the consequent loss of personal control is made worse if you are used to living

we pride ourselves on the provision of high-quality breaks, tailored to individual need. We also know from both written and verbal feedback that other guests on the Florida trip do not share his particular views.

We have a very rigorous complaints procedure and after thoroughly investigating Mr Morgan's concerns, we have written to acknowledge how they are being dealt with.

In the meantime, we will continue to solicit and evaluate comments from our guests to ensure that they receive the quality and care that they expect from a Winged Fellowship Trust holiday.

*Pat Wallace
Chief executive
Winged Fellowship Trust*

your life as independently as possible. There's a definite shift in power away from the client towards the helper, and this is often made worse when you have travelled long distances and feel exhausted.

These are issues common to all group holidays and they shouldn't be a problem with good leadership in place. But the Florida trip didn't seem to have that and this absence of control meant the volunteer helpers could do much as they pleased.

The senior nurse in charge nicknamed herself "the vet". When helpers came to get my girlfriend up one morning, one of them told her to wake up, it was feeding time.

There was some sloppy pairing of helper and client so that we were assigned two male helpers (twice, I think), which caused problems when my girlfriend needed help going to the loo. She is also diabetic and needs to eat regularly. This was on her form, but was ignored until complaints were made.

I felt humiliated by my main helper several times. Not only was I left to wet myself twice after pointing out the problem, but he found my deafness funny – very funny. I was horrified and then deeply angry. The anti-Irish banter got me down too.

We won't be going on another WFT holiday. But it would be cruel to write them off as a holiday organiser. Best to exercise caution at the planning stage is my advice.

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New horizons

Do you feel like seeing new places and meeting new people? Dan Batten has plenty of group holiday ideas to help you out

It's time to book your holiday, and you're looking through the brochures at various sun-kissed destinations, all offering a relaxing time doing as little as possible. All very nice, but at the back of your mind, you've done the lying in the sun bit and fancy something a bit more structured, possibly with a few activities thrown in. Equally, you wouldn't mind going with a group of like-minded people and, hopefully, making some new friends.

If you choose an activity-based holiday with a mainstream provider, be sure to check that they are registered with the British Activity Holiday Association (BAHA). To be registered with BAHA, companies must meet a set of safety standards and make a quality assurance statement. BAHA also offers a guide to anyone looking for an activity holiday in the UK or abroad.

If you can feel the call of the sea, check out what the Jubilee Sailing Trust has to offer. A holiday with them will make you a crew member on a tall ship, sailing around the UK or to places further afield, including Alicante, Las Palmas and Antigua. Even better, the ships are accessible to wheelchair users.

The charity Sense organises around 25 summer holidays for groups of deafblind children and adults to places around England and Wales, including Brighton and Whitland (centre). Again, there is a strong link to the water, with whitewater rafting, canoeing and boating on offer, but if you fancy taking it easier, you can always enjoy a spot of bowling or a relaxing aromatherapy massage.



If you fancy experiencing life on a working farm, Old Solomon's Farm is for you. Situated in the Tamar Valley on the Devon and Cornwall border, a trip to Old Solomon's will give you and your group hands-on experience of traditional hedge laying and building dry stone walls. You can have an introduction to keeping sheep, poultry and pigs or helping to bring some lambs into the world.



Scottish Cycling Holidays (SCH) offers plenty of choices if you fancy a holiday on wheels. Your group can follow a trail through "Rob Roy country", ride around the Isle of Skye, discover Orkney or follow a trail of castles. Further afield, SCH also runs group tours to Austria, Ireland, Italy, Sardinia and Spain.

INFORMATION

Accessible Travel and Leisure,
tel: 08702 416127,
website: www.accessibletravel.co.uk

British Activity Holiday Association,
website: www.baha.org.uk

The Jubilee Sailing Trust,
tel: 023 8044 9138,
website: www.jst.org.uk

Old Solomon's Farm,
tel: 01832 833242,
website: www.oldsolomansfarm.co.uk

Scottish Cycling Holidays,

tel: 01250 876100,
website: www.scotcycle.co.uk

Sense, tel: 020 7272 7774,
website: www.sense.org.uk/holidays

Singing for Larks, tel: 0161 881 0855,
website: www.singingforlarks.co.uk

Trans Indus, tel: 020 8566 2729,
website: www.transindus.co.uk

Youth Hostel Association,
Tel: 0870 241 2314, website: www.yha.org.uk



Jenny Cox got the most out of group activities on an "amazing" 17-day trip to South Africa organised by Accessible Travel and Leisure. "I'd always fancied going there, and I'd seen pictures in my son's *Lonely Planet* guides, so I thought 'why not?'".

Among the "countless" happy memories she has, Jenny, who has muscular dystrophy, remembers the group trip to Addo Elephant Park with great fondness. "There were six of us, plus our driver in a van, driving through a track in the park, looking at the elephants from a distance. Then we were suddenly surrounded by a mum and her

two babies brushing up on three sides of the van. It was wonderful to see them so close, but the driver warned us to keep still. You don't really want to frighten three elephants!"

When she wasn't watching the elephants, Jenny saw lots of nature's other wonders, including kingfishers, whales and ostriches. There was a trip in a cable car up Table Mountain, and around the wine-producing routes of Cape Town and the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens.

Next on Jenny's wish list of places to visit is India. "I'll have to convince my husband, though. I think he'd be happier going to Spain," she says.



Jane Shepherd says her favourite group holidays have been spent "singing my lungs out" with the a cappella, harmony-singing workshop group Singing for Larks. "A friend of mine told me about the group and said it would be right up my alley. I'd sung before, so I thought I'd give it a go," said Jane. The group stresses that a love of singing is more important than having a perfect voice.

Workshops last from one to four days with anywhere between ten and 40 people. Jane has plenty of reasons for returning, including the "quirky" venues chosen by group leader Faith Watson for their architecture and atmosphere, including Whalley Abbey in Lancashire. There's also the sense of group, which makes people feel like old friends.

And then there's the singing.

"We start off in small groups singing individual rounds of harmonies, which we all learn by ear," says Jane.

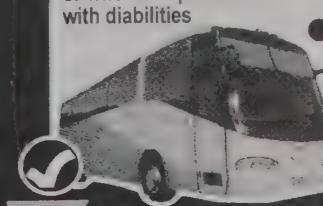
The groups then gather to create some sounds that cover a range of styles, including African, Maori and spiritual songs.

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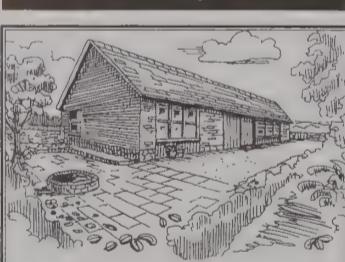
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Access Travel offers a broad selection of holidays for disabled travellers in its 2003 brochure. Options include a selection of self-catering gîtes in the French countryside, hotels in the Canary islands that offer a range of therapies, and holiday homes and bungalows in Florida. Access Travel can also arrange scheduled or chartered flights only on your behalf, car hire, special aids, and nursing and care services for your trip. For more information, tel: 01942 888844, or visit the website at: www.access-travel.co.uk



Visitors to Palm Springs should take a copy of *A Mobility Impaired Traveler's Guide to Palm Springs* with them to help avoid a few pitfalls. The guide features measurements and photos of disabled access features at key resorts, information on major attractions and accessible public facilities, as well as disabled parking. Tel: 020 7978 3436, website: www.palm-springs.org



Those knights of the road the AA have published the third edition of their *Disabled Travellers Guide*, full of useful tips to keep your wheels rolling at home and abroad. These include details of accessible roadside stops and accommoda-

tion, tourist attractions and AA European assistance. There is also advice on travel by train, bus, air and ferry, as well as useful organisations to talk to and essential documents to carry. Also available in Braille, large print and tape. £4.99, free to AA members, tel: 0800 262050, textphone: 0800 3282810.



Winchester Tourism and Winchester Shopmobility have published *Visitor Trail by Wheelchair*. The leaflet details a mile-long trail accessible by wheelchair users which takes you through the Square, used for corn, wood and animal markets in the 14th and 15th centuries, Winchester Cathedral, the house Jane Austen died in, and Wolvesey Castle. Tel: 01962 840500, e-mail: tourism@winchester.gov.uk

Tripscope is another invaluable source of information. The charity offers advice on making journeys in the UK as well as help in planning a holiday or other trip abroad from the UK, using either public or private transport. Helpline, tel: 08457 585641, website: www.tripscope.org.uk

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Rules & Regulations

- Applicants will be issued with a *DN Travel Club* membership number, which must be quoted at the time of booking any travel arrangement. Unless such notification is provided, no discounts or special offers will apply once a confirmation of booking has been issued.
- Discounts and special offers will apply to the member and all other parties booking under the same lead name/party organiser, unless expressly indicated otherwise in the relevant *DN Travel Club* offer.
- Membership of the *DN Travel Club* will be valid as long as the *DN Travel Club* remains in operation. In the event of cessation of the *DN Travel Club*, one month's notice will be given in *Disability Now*.
- Any discounts offered would be deducted from the final balance payment of any travel arrangement.

DN's Good Grub series kicks off this month

A future in food

Michael Caines is one of Britain's top chefs, and the youngest chef to be awarded two stars by the prestigious Michelin Guide. At the age of 33, he is head chef and co-director at Gidleigh Park Hotel and Restaurant in Chagford, Devon, and managing director of Michael Caines Restaurant, at the Royal Clarence Hotel, Exeter. In 1994, two months after joining Gidleigh Park, his right arm was amputated following a car accident.

As I lay in the wreckage of my car, I thought to myself: "That's it, my career is finished."

I had worked all my bloody life to cook at the highest level and now I had messed it up by having a terrible accident. My right arm had to be amputated just below the shoulder.

I had left school at 16 knowing that all I wanted was to be a chef. After two years at catering college, I joined the Grosvenor House Hotel in London.

From there, Raymond Blanc took me to his *Le Manoir Aux Quat' Saisons* in Oxfordshire. Those three years were a superb introduction to quality cuisine.

I then spent three fantastic years in France, at restaurants

in Burgundy and Paris, both of which had three Michelin stars, before Raymond Blanc recommended me for the job of head chef at Gidleigh Park.

The accident happened two months later, in August, 1994. At first, I thought my career was finished. I didn't have the will to go on living, but the negative thoughts didn't last. I am not one of those people who give up without trying.

The day after my arm was amputated, I decided I was willing to have a go, if the job was still there. I remember thinking: "It doesn't change anything. All the knowledge is still there."

I returned to work and gradually learned what I could and couldn't do.



Star chef: Michael earns his Michelin stars in the kitchen

I am now in charge of ten chefs, so there is always someone else who can do those things I am unable to do myself, such as fiddly things like turning the vegetables.

There are a lot more things I can do than I can't, and the things I can't do aren't significant enough to stop me from being successful. It's all about focusing on what you are good at.

I am currently the youngest chef to hold two Michelin stars. They were awarded in 1999, four and a half years after my arm was amputated.

The year after the accident, I went to Chicago in search of the best prosthesis I could find, and was shown the Otto Bock Ergo Arm and Myo Hand,

which has allowed me to grip and grab hold of things.

It is not impossible to cook with a prosthetic arm. You just need to forget the way you used to do it. Many of the things you do as a chef are done with one arm. The other arm is very much there just to hold and support things.

The main thing to remember is you need a sharp knife and a stable chopping board. Have a wet cloth under your board so things don't slip around.

Shop carefully, look at what you are buying. Think about things a little more in advance. Cook potatoes with the skin on, cut things in half before you peel them, or buy pre-prepared items from the supermarket.

I often cook at home for

friends and make the cooking part of the entertainment. If friends come round, I tell them to peel the potatoes while I make the *vinaigrette*.

There are also many gadgets, such as blenders and electric carving knives. Electronics have taken away the need to put brute force into cooking.

Also, you can ask your butcher or fishmonger to prepare your meat or fish.

When you first use your arm, all these questions go through your head, but when you get on with your life you find a balance and somehow it just gradually happens.

Although you need to be practical and pragmatic, having a disability need not be an obstacle to becoming a chef.

Here is one of Michael Caines' recipes

Poached smoked haddock in grain mustard sauce with spinach

Ingredients

- 8x180gr smoked haddock
- Grain mustard sauce
- 800gr fresh spinach

Grain Mustard Sauce

- 25gr flour
- 25gr butter
- 100gr grain mustard
- 600ml milk, or 300ml and milk 300ml fish stock
- Small onion studded with 2 cloves
- 200gr sliced button mushrooms
- 50gr chopped onion
- Clove of garlic, chopped finely
- 50gr butter
- Chopped parsley

First, we need to make a *béchamel* sauce.

Heat the milk in a saucepan. In a separate saucepan, melt the 25gr of butter, add the flour, and cook until blonde in colour (*roux*). Remove from the heat, cooling slightly before adding some of the hot milk.

Whisk in the hot milk until smooth and continue until all the milk is whisked into the roux. Now add the studded onion and cook for 30 minutes slowly. Once cooked, pass through a fine sieve and reserve for later use.

Take a saucepan, and using the 50gr of butter, sweat the chopped onions, chopped garlic and sliced button mushrooms for 5 minutes, no colour.

Add the *béchamel* and grain mustard; bring to a boil and season. Correct the consistency and reserve for later.

Method

Poach the smoked haddock in half water and half milk for approximately eight minutes. Pan-fry the spinach in a little butter and season with salt and pepper. Place the spinach onto the centre of the plate and place the poached haddock on top. Sauce over and around the fish and serve. Serves eight

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Douglas Campbell reports on customer-friendly developments at Motability and the launch of a petrol pump scheme

Motability uplift

Motability has announced substantial changes to benefit users of the Motability scheme, starting on 1 February.

Customers of the scheme will no longer have to pay for reasonable damage to their car caused, unavoidably, by a wheelchair or mobility aids. Users and disability organisations have been calling for this for years, and it has become more urgent since changes in the scheme meant that quite small amounts of damage produced large bills.

Motability Operations, the new name for this part of the scheme, is also conducting field trials of protective plastic covers that can be fitted to cars where damage is likely to occur. Early results are promising, and the covers could be available to all customers by the end of 2003.

Changes to the mileage limit will help people who exceed the current 36,000 miles over the three year contract. New, flexible payments options will be introduced for people who exceed the limit so that, if they wish, they can defer payment until the end of the contract.

Contract hire customers who want to buy the car at the end of the three year contract will be invited to do so. They should be able to find out the exact price three months before the end of the contract so they

can decide whether to buy that car or apply for a new one on the scheme. Motability Operations is developing warranty and finance terms to assist customers purchasing under these new arrangements.

Some customers need to terminate their contract hire agreement early. At present, they can only know the financial penalty after Motability has sold the car. Under the new arrangement, they will be told the fixed charge before they decide to end the contract.

The interest charges on the Motability hire purchase scheme will be reduced to offer a much more competitive deal.

Some changes will apply to all existing customers, but some will only apply to contracts starting after 1 February. In many cases, only an outline of the changes is available now, but details will follow soon.

Motability has pledged to deliver a "world-class customer service". This will take time. The telephone helplines are a priority. Motability says that staff will be customer focused and able to handle customer calls effectively.

As Motability celebrates its 25th birthday, it is good to know that it is beginning to mature and understand the real needs of the disabled people it serves.

Happy helpers

Garage Watch will officially launch their Happy2Help scheme in March.

Disabled drivers wanting to know where they can obtain help with refuelling can already use the pilot Happy2Help scheme by logging on to www.Happy2Help.org or by telephoning 0870 794 3456.

Garage Watch was set up by Mark Bradshaw, who is working with other independent garages owners to ensure they are not swept away by changes in the retail petrol industry. As well as acting as a very effective trade association, they have committed their organisation to helping customers.

Happy2Help is about more than helping disabled drivers



fill up with petrol. It is also about providing other goods and services at the garage and helping elderly customers. It is amazing that the small people in this industry can achieve what the big oil companies appear incapable of even considering.

TV

Obviously, the Big News is Michael Jackson. The world's media caught him hobbling along on crutches, suffering terribly from a spider bite on his foot. And all this only months after all the distress we had over Beckham's metatarsal.

With his continually reconstituted face, perhaps Jacko should enter the World Gurning Championships at the Egremont Crab Fair in Cumbria, as covered by BBC1's *Countryfile*. Or why not go the whole hog – *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* as portrayed by Charles Laughton on BBC2.

After *Dwarves in Showbiz* and *Teenage Dwarves* (not to mention dwarves in TV ads) we had ITV1's *Real Life: Size Matters*. Wendy, not a dwarf, was quoted £27,000 for leg-lengthening surgery to add three inches. Why bother? She's a successful woman, with a devoted husband and two gorgeous children. After all, Jeanette Krain's not complaining. She's done all right out of being short, as we saw in BBC1's *The Entertainers*. Just count yourself lucky you're not married to Leo Sayer, Wendy.

Elsewhere there have been several miracles on display. In BBC1's excellent drama *Judge John Deed*, suave Christopher Cazenove plays the CPS boss with the stylish black cane. But when they cut to him fencing energetically with his mate the Judge, there was no black cane. Also, in the enjoyable ITV1 drama *Foyle's War*, I was thrilled to see Sgt Milner progress in four weeks from lower limb amputee to being totally stickless and unaided, with hardly a trace of a limp whatsoever. Those wartime prostheses must have been marvellous.

BBC1's film *At First Sight* reminded me of the recent BBC2 documentary *The Man Who Learnt to See*, exploring the difficulties of suddenly having your sight restored. Nice idea. Shame about the film. OK, it was based on a true story, but in my view it was toe-curlingly bad. And I can't curl my toes!

Jane Shepherd



Coming up

Voluntary organisation Deafway is looking for deaf actors, with or without experience, and sign language interpreters to work on a theatre project in Brighton in March. The project will use only deaf performers and BSL. The performance will be made accessible to hearing audience members by interpreters doing live voice-overs. Send CVs to David Hynes, Deafway, Brockholes Brow, Preston PR2 5AL, tel: 01772 796461, text: 01772 796461, fax: 01772 654439.

Chickenshed's musical, *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King*, until 18 January, includes signed and captioned performances. Box office, tel: 020 8292 9222, minicom: 020 8350 0676.

The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts is holding Finding the Spotlight, a disability arts conference, 28-31 May, and wants proposals for conference items. Contact Lisa Vingoe, tel: 0151 330 3379, e-mail: l.vingoe@lipa.ac.uk

Film

Spider



With Spider, David Cronenberg moves away from his trademark outlandish effects-filled horror to a more restrained, though still intense, narrative.

Spider (Ralph Fiennes), released from a mental institution, is sent to a hostel in the East End area where he grew up. The area begins to awaken childhood memories, including the startling suggestion that his father (Gabriel Byrne) murdered his mother in order to move a prostitute (Miranda Richardson in both parts) into the house.

Like Dennis Potter's *The Singing Detective*, this is a plot that forces one to consider the issue of what is true. The adult Spider is grappling with memories that are clearly unreliable, if only because he was not present for much of what he is recalling. But are these false recollections of childhood, or correct memories of childhood misconceptions?

We can distinguish reality from unreality more



successfully than Spider, but the film still moves inexorably to a shocking conclusion. As Spider travels this journey, Ralph Fiennes, articulating the feelings of an exceptionally inarticulate character, is extraordinary.

Writer Patrick McGrath claims his script is "a full-scale investigation of the schizophrenic mind". This is nonsense. The film is vastly less informative about the experience of schizophrenia, than, for example, Aidan Schindler's visual arts work. Cronenberg's own description of it as "an austere psychodrama" is nearer the

mark. It is unusual in its implied recognition that mental disturbance can take place in childhood, though it fails to explain what has triggered the events we see played out.

Spider is an engrossing and moving small-scale film, original, intelligent and humane. It could have been a television drama, in the days when "drama" meant more than turgid soaps and interminable overblown costume dramas. But British television doesn't make single plays any more, so it's a Canadian film.

Allan Sutherland

Snap it up



Entries are already arriving for the 2003 Freedom in Focus competition, and the standard is as high as ever. If you would like to win up to £500 in cash, a camera, £200 towards a photography course of your choice or a trip on the London Eye, then get snapping.

This year's categories, Nature and Modern Life, can be interpreted any way you like – but judges will be looking for creativity and personal expression. Winners and runners-up will be chosen for each category, with two age groups each (18 and over and under 18). The closing date is 30 April 2003.

Competition rules

1. The competition is open to disabled people, resident in the UK who are amateur photographers.
2. Entrants must take their own photographs, or direct them if they are unable to hold a camera.
3. Five entries per category is allowed per person. Prints must be unmounted, 10in x 8in max, colour or black and white. If you are submitting a digital photograph, please include a disk with the original image on it. Slides are accepted.
4. All entries may be used free of charge for publicity purposes. Copyright will remain with the entrant.
5. Send an SAE if you would like your entry returned.
6. Winners must be prepared to attend the award ceremony in June 2003. Overnight expenses will be met if deemed necessary and standard-class travel expenses covered. The judges' decision is final.
7. The competition is not open to staff of *Disability Now*, Leonard Cheshire or Barclays.
8. Each photograph must be given a title. Write the title and category on a label and attach to back of photo.

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Entry form

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Daytime contact no

Are you: Under 18 18 or over

Number of photographs entered

Did you take the photo? Yes

Did you direct the photo? Yes

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London N7 9BR.**

No stamp required. Please read all the rules before sending your entry. This entry form is also available at www.disabilitynow.org.uk



ILLUSTRATION BY CLARE CURTIS

Dear Ann

- love and loneliness
- bereavement
- personal problems
- advice and support

Ann Darnbrough, who is disabled herself, is co-author of the *Directory for Disabled People* and other guides.

Write to her at *Disability Now*, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW or e-mail your problem to editor@disabilitynow.org.uk



Taxing questions

Where can I find out about Disabled Persons Tax Credit? I am thinking about trying to get a job and don't know the next move.

Annie, Nottingham
I recommend you contact the Tax Credit helpline.

I am sure you would find them helpful. Have a list of questions ready and information about what you want to do and your circumstances, including any benefits you receive, just in case they ask.

Bear in mind that there will be new tax credits from April 2003 which will replace DPTC.

Good luck.

Cruse Bereavement Care helpline, tel: 0845 7585 565 or 0870 167 1677, e-mail: info@crusebereavementcare.org.uk

DIAL UK, tel: 01302 310123, www.dialuk.org.uk

HOMES, 242 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1AU, tel: 020 7963 0200.

Tax Credit helpline, tel: 0845 605 5858.

RNIB Welfare Rights Service helpline, tel: 08457 66 99 99.

DLA difficulties

The Benefits Agency constantly refuse to send me details of the figures in my Disability Living Allowance assessment, which I know has been wrongly put together.

Also, I would like to know how I can check that a person on a tribunal is not really a Benefits Agency person, using a false name.

Charles, London
Information on financial benefits is provided by the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), whose workers are highly trained to make this service available. Contact your nearest CAB and take along all your relevant information,

including the results of your assessment, so they can go through your financial affairs.

I don't blame you for being suspicious about people in authority, but I think you would be wise to trust that those serving on tribunals are who they say they are. Often there is a disability representative sitting on the tribunal. They are on the side of fair play within the law, and appeals are often successful.

You could check if there is a DIAL (Disability Information Advice Line) near you. Try your telephone directory or contact DIAL UK for details of your nearest DIAL.

Home hope

I am disabled and need to move to another area to be nearer to relatives so they can give me support, but my council say they will not help me. I don't know what to do next or who can help me.

Gillian, Devon
It always gives me pleasure

They've let us down

My partner died recently after a long illness. We had become somewhat isolated and our social life was non-existent, despite making an effort to keep in touch with our friends.

None of these so-called friends has been in touch since the funeral. My partner enjoyed their company and I feel devastated for her. I feel pain knowing that she isn't in their thoughts.

John, Widnes

Many people are scared and embarrassed by death, and they are frightened of saying the wrong thing.

From what you say, your wife would have wanted you to continue to enjoy a social life.

Do something new. Interests galore are there for the taking and are one of the ways of making new friends – whether it's brass rubbing, rambling, politics, saving the environment or, of course, voluntary work, which is not just about "doing good" but can be great fun too. Go to your local library – you'll find opportunities you never knew existed. Your wife would, I'm sure, applaud you.

You could also contact Cruse Bereavement Care who offer telephone counselling, and information and advice on practical matters.

Friends united

My sight has been steadily getting worse and I have now been told I should register as partially sighted. Obviously, I can no longer drive and I do not get out as much as I used to. I am becoming quite isolated. I would like to be in touch with other people who may have a similar problem.

Mary, Bournemouth

You might like to consider joining one of the Tele Befriending Groups run by RNIB Talk and Support. These social groups are no larger than six people, and people get together regularly over the phone from their own homes. They are open to people with sight problems of any age.

You could also get support from your local social services sensory impairment team and the local organisation for blind and partially sighted people. For more information about help in your local area, contact Barry Jones in the RNIB Welfare Rights Service.

Help at the end of the phone



DN's telephone counsellor Lin Berwick gives disabled people and carers advice and support on personal and spiritual problems. Disabled herself, Lin is a psycho-therapeutic counsellor and Methodist local preacher, with a postgraduate diploma in homeopathic medicine. If you have something you need to discuss in confidence, talk to her on Mondays 6pm-10pm and Thursdays 1pm-5pm, tel: 01787 882111.

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However, help is at hand through the network of local Talking Newspapers and the National Service. Together they provide audio tape versions of approximately 1100 local papers along with more than 200 national publications. The National Service also provides material in electronic format.

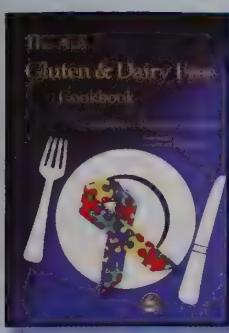
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Registered Charity 293656

Bright ideas



If you're on a gluten or dairy-free diet and are struggling for innovative meal ideas, try Marilyn Le Breton's *Gluten & Dairy-Free Cookbook*, published by Jessica Kingsley in association with the charity Allergy-Induced Autism. It has 400 recipes, ranging from meat and vegetarian dishes to desserts and snacks. How about making your own dairy-free yoghurt, toad in the hole or, even better, Very Rich and Yummy Chocolate Cake?

The book also includes tips on travelling with a child who has food allergies and recipes for non-food items such as play dough. £14.95, www.jkp.com

Is it awkward to get comfortable in bed using a standard pillow? Then maybe a space-age pillow from Tempur will bring you sweet dreams. Made with technology originally developed by NASA, pressure is evenly distributed throughout the pillow when you use it, so your neck and shoulder muscles can relax completely, even when you find yourself in a strange position. Other Tempur products include a back bed support and travel neck pillow. Prices range from £55 to £80. Tel: 020 8589 7100, website: www.tempur.co.uk

Ever look down at your walking stick and wish it had a bit more class? Charles Buyers and Company has a stick for every taste, with designs including silver-plated handles, moulded heads in the shape of animals and folding sticks. From £3.15, tel: 01294 313222, website: www.charlesbuyers.com

Want to take up lawn bowls but can't because of the inflexibility of your wheelchair? Take to the green in a Bradshaw bowls buggy and you'll soon succeed. When you lean forward to deliver a bowl, the buggy rocks on to its footrest, which automatically locks the chair so you can make a clean delivery. The buggy is lightweight, will leave no marks on the green and can be assembled without tools. £1,598, and a waterproof transporter costs an extra £197. Tel: 01275 848070, e-mail: bbbugs@supanet.com

DN reader Brenda Vallow wrote in with advice that readers might find helpful. She had had multiple sclerosis for almost 30 years, with regular relapses, when she came

across an article recommending evening primrose oil as an effective treatment. She reports having "no relapses for a significant

number of years since taking it". It can be found in health food stores, including Holland and Barrett. Prices start at £5.49 for 60 capsules, www.hollandandbarrett.com

Heard of any interesting gadgets? Contact Dan Batten, tel: 020 7619 7323, e-mail: editor@disabilitynow.org.uk

Gadget expert Dan Batten comes up trumps again with heaps of inspirational equipment ideas



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Wouldn't life be great if you could take your own ramps with you wherever you went and get in to all those inaccessible buildings? Well, with Unwin Safety System's Freeway range of portable aluminium ramps you can. The Freeway 21 ramp is for use with minibuses and multi-passenger vehicles as well as low-level building access, while the Freeway 31 has three ramps and gives access to vehicles and buildings with a threshold of up to 60cm from ground level. Both ramps have non-slip surfaces and locking mechanisms to secure them into position. The Freeway 21 is £223.60 and the Freeway 31 is £339.04 excluding VAT and delivery. Tel: 01935 410920, www.unwin-safety.com



If you're looking to install an environmental control system at home, have a look at the SRS Technology catalogue. They supply systems which can perform a variety of tasks, including closing windows, blinds and doors at the press of a button or switch. They also have a range of switches and joysticks that can be operated in a number of ways, including by blinking, blowing or sucking. For more information, tel: 01922 456882, or visit www.srsotechnology.co.uk

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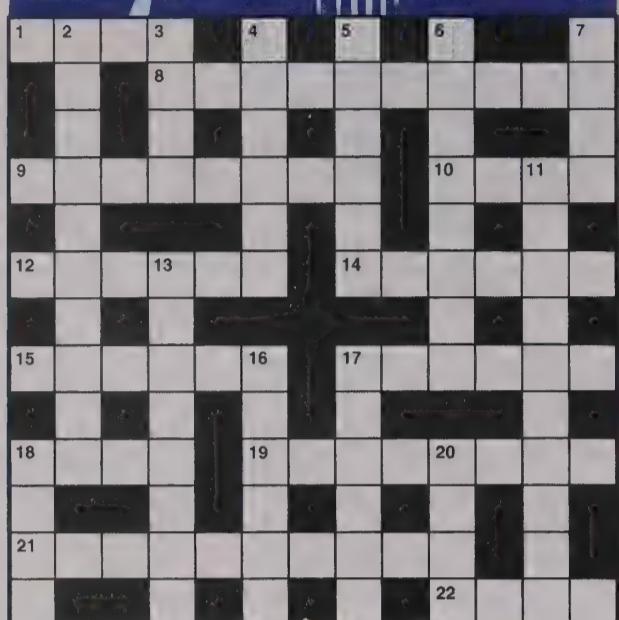
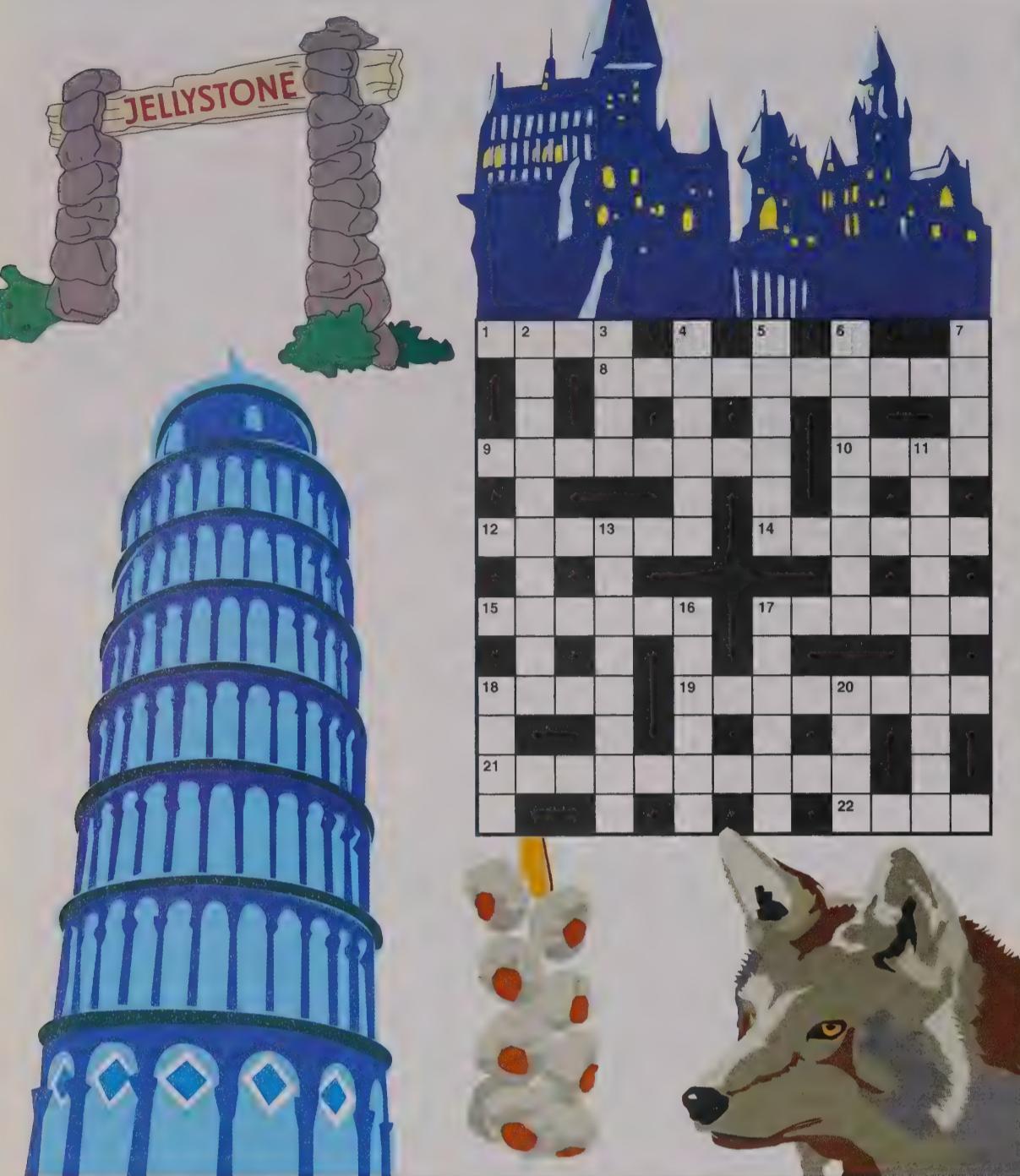
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Xterra
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ACROSS

- Crust formed over a sore in healing (4)
- Kind of climbing bean (6,4)
- Warwick Davis plays this professor in *Harry Potter And The Chamber Of Secrets* (8)
- Capital city situated on the River Tiber (4)
- Actor who won Oscars for *American Beauty* and *The Usual Suspects* (6)
- Dismal, dull and gloomy (6)
- Plant with a pungent, strong-smelling bulb used in cookery (6)
- Learning disability charity (6)
- This country's official languages are Spanish and Quechua (4)
- Cartoon character who lives in Jellystone National Park (4,4)
- The Deaf Broadcasting Council is unhappy with the number of digital TV channels which are not doing this (10)
- Triumphant joy (4)

DOWN

- Thin, transparent wrapping material (10)
- Unpleasant child (4)
- State of hostility (6)
- Sneaked a look (6)
- City in Scotland associated with the oil boom (8)
- And 20 Down. Labour MP who is a wheelchair user (4,4)
- Minister for Disabled People (5,5)
- Indian city infamous for its Black Hole (8)
- North American prairie-wolf (6)
- Kind of crow reputed to collect objects (6)
- Italian city with a leaning tower (4)
- See 7 Down.

CROSSWORD BY JIM MCLAREN
ILLUSTRATION BY JAMIE TROUNCE
ANSWERS ON PAGE 37

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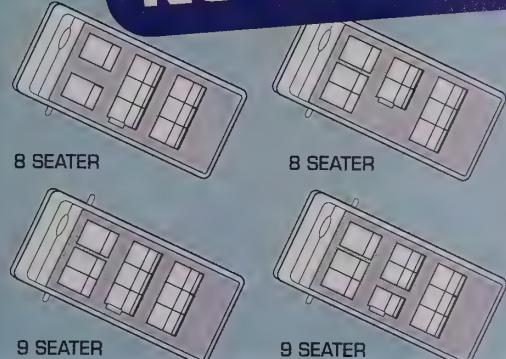
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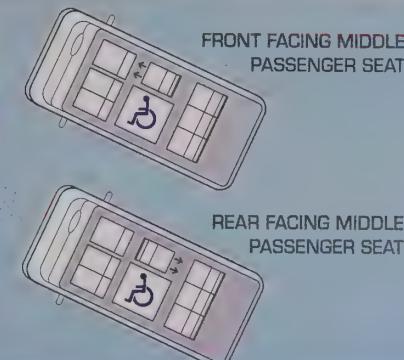
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Publications

The ME Tips Collection offers a range of practical advice on living with ME Compiled by a family who have a member with severe ME, the collection covers areas such as quality of life, coping strategies, travelling, parenting and noise sensitivity. Copies cost £1 in stamps from ME, PO box 1302, Wells BA5 1YE. The collection is also available online, website: www.metips.co.uk

Disability Alliance has published *Charges for Community Care Services*. Aimed at disabled people and carers in England and Wales, the guide explains what the law says about how councils should calculate charges and what people should do if they think they are being over-charged or can't afford to pay. It also contains a full list of benefits available to disabled people and carers and information on useful organisations to approach for further help and information. Tel: 020 7247 8776.

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) has published *How Do I Make a Claim?*, an employment tribunal guide. The guide aims to inform disabled people about their rights under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and how they should go about making a claim if they believe their rights have been infringed by an employer, as well as helping employers and service providers to understand their rights and responsibilities under the DDA. Free. Contact the DRC Helpline, tel: 08457 622 633; textphone: 08457 622 644; email: enquiry@drc-gb.org

The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health has published *Breaking the Circles of Fear* (£15), a review of the relationship between mental health services and African and Caribbean communities, and *Out of the Maze* (£10), which gives advice on reaching and supporting Londoners with severe mental health problems. Other new titles include the GP's Guide to Managing Severe Mental Illness (£5), *Users' voices* (£15, £7.50 for mental health service users) and *Clinical Risk Management* (£15). Contact the publications department, tel: 020 7827 8352.

The Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society has published a directory of respite care providers for people with MS. As well as including descriptions of the different types of respite care available, the directory includes information on obtaining funding and questions to ask when choosing the right respite care for you. £4.95. Tel: 020 8438 0700, website: www.mssociety.org.uk

Skill, the national bureau for students with disabilities, has published *Into Higher Education 2003*. Aimed at students thinking about entering higher education, the guide features advice on completing applications, getting support, grants and benefits as well as student experiences. The guide also includes listings written by institutions offering higher education courses and contact details for their own disability co-ordinator. £12.50 for professionals, £2.50 for disabled students. Tel: 020 7450 0620, email: skill@skill.org.uk

The Centre for Accessible Environments has published *Safety, Security and Environmental Controls*. The guide gives advice and information to occupational therapists, housing managers and professionals who specify assistive technology to enable disabled and older people to have control of their environments. Sections include safety and security, smart home technology, a list of equipment manufacturers and suppliers and a checklist for specifiers. £10.50 per copy, including p&p. Tel: 020 7357 8182.

The Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society has published *Just Diagnosed: an introduction to MS and MS Essentials*. *Just Diagnosed* gives details of what is known about MS, how it affects different people in different ways and how a diagnosis is made. There is also information on available treatments and how to manage life with MS.

MS Essentials is a series of 16-page booklets looking at different areas including managing relapses, MS, memory and thinking and MS and Insurance. All publications are free. Contact the Information Team, Multiple Sclerosis Society, MS National Centre, 372 Edgware Road, London NW2 6ND.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1. Scab 8. Runner Bean 9. Flitwick 10. Rome 12. Spacey 14. Dreary 15. Garlic 17. Mencap 18. Peru 19. Yogi Bear 21. Subtitling 22. Glee

DOWN: 2. Cellophane 3. Brat 4. Enmity 5. Peaked 6. Aberdeen 7. Anne 11. Maria Eagle 13. Calcutta 16. Coyote 17. Magpie 18. Pisa 20. Begg

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MORE GOOD NEWS! Are you on a means-tested benefit? If so, you can subscribe to DN at no cost! Benefits accepted: income support, housing benefit, council tax exemption, disabled person's tax credit, job seeker's allowance.

For more information, call our HOTLINE or write to:
Disability Now Subscriptions, FREEPOST LON18316, Patchway, Bristol BS32 0ZZ

Disability Rights Commission**A Public Debate**

The Right To Live & The Right To Die

The DRC is hosting a free public debate on the issue of euthanasia.

**20 January 2003, 6.30 - 10.00pm
Church House, Westminster.**

Admission is by ticket only and places are limited. Tickets are not available at the door.

To book:

Telephone: 0161 261 1818

Textphone: 0161 261 1702

Fax: 0161 261 1701

Email: claire.seaward@drc-gb.org

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Services

The British Deaf Association Helpline has launched an e-video-mail service. Deaf people with a webcam can send their enquiry in sign language and a response will be sent back by e-video-mail. If the person does not have a webcam but can watch video clips on their PC, they can ask for a response to be sent by e-video-mail. 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, textphone: 0800 6522 965, telephone: 0870 770 3300, videophone: 020 7496 9539, fax: 020 7588 3527, email: helpline@bda.org.uk

Courses

Mental Health Media has produced Electric Apple, a PC CD-Rom containing information and first person accounts of different approaches to mental distress. It looks at strategies that have helped people manage their mental health problems and features personal experiences in pictures, words, sound and video. £19.95, concessionary price: £14.95. tel: 020 7700 8171, website: www.mhmedia.com

Video

Mental Health Media has released *What Women Want*. This video and training workbook look at real life experiences of women who have used mental health services, and discusses sexual abuse, self harm, motherhood and experiences on mixed sex wards, as well as the implications of the Government's strategy for women's mental health. It also features examples of best practice in mental health services and service improvements that have come about due to service users' input. £74.95 including vat, p&p for large organisations, £44.95 including vat and p&p for organisations with fewer than 10 full time employees. Tel: 020 7700 8171, Fax: 020 7686 0959.

Volunteers wanted

Wigan based advocacy service Add A Voice are looking for new volunteers to train as advocates. Volunteers will undertake a variety of duties, including attending hospital appointments with clients and helping them to ask questions, assisting clients with complaints procedure, attending meetings, helping to complete forms and enabling clients to access services. Training starts in February. Tel: 01942 601563, e-mail lucy@addavoice.fsnet.co.uk

DID YOU KNOW? DN is available on tape, disk and by e-mail.

Contact Talking Newspapers, see imprint, page 2.



Hereward College

Opportunities for everyone...

...Because as the national college for disabled students we also welcome people who are not disabled ...because at Hereward all students enjoy equal access to a broad range of academic and vocational courses ...because individual students need an individual approach.

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Hereward College exists to provide education and training to its community of customers

**Recognising
Individual
Achievement**



• Recruitment (on pages 38 to 42)



OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

UP TO 25 PAY BAND 3 (EXECUTIVE OFFICER) POSTS

FINANCE ACCOUNTING SERVICES DIVISION HEMPSTEAD HOUSE, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

Starting Salary £18,943.00*

*The London/National pay areas will be reviewed as part of the 2003/04 pay review to include Hemel Hempstead within the London pay area by at latest wef 1 August 2004.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) is looking for up to 25 Pay Band 3 (Executive Officer) staff to work in its Finance Accounting Services Division at Hemel Hempstead. The posts are in a number of work areas in the division including: FASD IT Support; Application Management and Support; SAP Authorisations; SAP Report Writing; Finance Help Desk, Centre of Financial Expertise, Personnel; Corporate Planning; General Ledger and Accounting; Electoral Claims; Accounts Payable, and Vendor Records. Some of the posts will include staff management responsibilities.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

ESSENTIAL

The successful candidates must possess a minimum of 2 A Levels (or equivalent) OR a minimum of two years experience of policy development in an office environment.

In addition to this the successful candidates must also:

- have the ability to manage work and resources;
- possess communication and analytical skills;
- have the ability to develop and apply expertise;
- have the ability to work collaboratively
- have the ability to lead a team when required.
- be comfortable with using IT and be familiar with word processing and spreadsheets (the department currently uses Word 97 and Excel 97).

DESIRABLE

At least one of the following is desirable for each post:

- the possession of an AAT or recognised equivalent qualification
- knowledge or experience of working with large scale financial management systems (the department's current corporate accounting system is SAP)
- experience of working in a Personnel/Human Resources environment (or the ability to demonstrate an understanding of the sensitivities involved)

An information pack and application form can be obtained from:

Sarah Thomas 020 7944 2747 (strictly between 9:00am and 5:00pm) or by e-mailing

Jane_meyer@odpm-dft.gsi.gov.uk with your name and full postal address. An electronic version of the information pack and application form is also available. Please provide your e-mail address.

Applications are also welcome from those wishing to work part-time/job share.

Applications to: Jane Meyer, Room 2/06, Hempstead House, 2 Selden Hill, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 4XN.

Closing date for receipt of applications: 5 pm, Wednesday 8 January 2003



ODPM is committed to equality of opportunity. All staff receive fair treatment throughout their careers regardless of race, ethnic or national origin, age, religion, gender, marital status, disability or sexual orientation.

The ODPM policy of non-discrimination will be observed by all staff, both in their dealings with colleagues and with members of the public. Applications are welcomed from all suitably qualified candidates irrespective of race, ethnic or national origin, age, religion, gender, marital status, disability or sexual orientation.

Under the Data Protection Act, the data provided on completed application forms will only be used for the specific purpose of Human Resources management and will not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose.

DN LINAGE

Tel: 020 7619 7320, Fax: 020 7619 7331, Minicom: 020 7619 7332,

E-mail: patrick.durhammatthews@scope.org.uk

• Personal

MY NAME IS Michael. I am a Christian astrologer (not professional). I have a rare type of dyslexia. Interests are history, old time dancing, piano, newspaper cuttings and steam engines. I am a young looking 52 and wltm a lady, perhaps younger. I am 6 ft and slim. I live near Bishop's Stortford. Box no: 211.

• Cars/vans

FIAT FIORINO VAN, Safari 1.3, 1 owner, L reg, 28k miles, white, petrol. Universal Mobility conversion with ramp at rear, together with wheelchair straps. Full service history, MOT expires August 2003. Fold-up seat behind passenger seat and room for wheelchair at back. In excellent condition, coat £12,000, asking £2,500 ono. Tel: 0121 604 4960 or, mobile: 0788 7550110.

FORD TRANSIT 80 semi-high roof, turbo diesel, automatic 96P, 37k miles. Ricon rear lift with remote control (Interbility conversion); 5 seats + wheelchair with floor restraints. Hand controls, air conditioning, swivel front seat. One owner, fsh, MOT until November 2003. £7,750 ono. Tel: 01442 865470 (Herts).

VW GOLF BLACK 1.8, 40k miles 1996, hand and infra red controls, auto, chair, cruise control, full service history, 2 owners. £4,500 ono. Tel: 020 7733 5566.

RENAULT EXTRA FREEDOM 1.4 M reg, 36k miles, ramped rear access for wheelchair passenger, 3 seats, Atlas conversion. Mot. Excellent condition, £3,500 ono. Tel: 01305 774605 (Weymouth).

ELAP ROTATING PASSENGER seat for Toyota Corolla. As new. Offers. Tel: 01744 884832.

MERCEDES AMBIENTE 2.8 R reg, metallic blue, auto, petrol, 40k miles. Air conditioned/abs/central locking, cassette radio, leather upholstery. Interbility side entrance with hydraulic lift and tracking for wheelchair. Can seat 5 plus wheelchair. One owner, fsh, 6 months' MOT. £14,950. Tel: 01243 670736 or mobile: 07733 438724.

CAR MOBILITY 180 degree swivel seat. Extends out of vehicle, new in September 02, cost new £1,500, accept £800. Baseplates available to fit most vehicles circa £140. Fitted at present in jeep sport. Tel: 01663 741538 or mobile: 07773 336591.

DAIHATSU HIJET 1 litre, petrol. R registered (1997), 38k miles. Fold down ramp with electric winch. Seats three plus wheelchair. £2,000. Contact Eric on: 01433 651779 (Warrington area).

RENAULT EXTRA, POYNTINGS conversion 1.4, petrol, M reg, only 15k miles. Carries driver passenger and wheelchair user, also has a removable seat and ramp. I owner, MOT expires June 2003, fsh. Dark blue, raised roof, in very good condition both interior and exterior. Asking £2,500. Tel: 01359 250813.

FIAT ADAPTED FOR wheelchair. Tax, MOT. £800. Tel: 01275 543465.

• Wheelchairs/scooters

INVACARE AURIGA 4 scooter - still under manufacturer's guarantee - cost £2,400. Due to bereavement machine still in showroom. £1,900 ono. Tel/fax: 01823 480813 (Taunton).

SUNRISE MEDICAL F55 powerchair, top of the range type, 3 years old and in excellent condition. Metallic red in colour. Cost £3,695 asking £1,800 to include full warranty cover from Mark Bates Ltd (could deliver). Tel: 01904 691200 (York).

• For Sale

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES FOR SALE

2001 Y Zaphira Chairman, 8,000 miles, air con etc, 1.8 Auto	£18,500
2001 Y VW Caddy, low mileage, P.A.S., air con	£12,500
2001 Y VW 1.9TD Cruiser, 1 owner, 2,750 miles, tail lift	£13,500
2000 W Suzuki Wagon R Liberty, 1 owner, 28,000 miles	£7,995
2000 W Dispatch Chairman, 1 owner, 6,000 miles	£13,750
2000 W Espace Hill Grau, 1 owner, 8,000 miles, air con, CD etc	£19,995
2000 V Mercedes Vito Versa 113, 1 owner, 27,000 miles	£10,750
1999 T VW 2.5 TD LWB, Hi-Top, 17,000 miles, 1 owner, side lift & air con	£13,995
1999 T Toyota Powervan 2.7, 1 owner, tail lift, 36,000 miles	£10,750
1998 R Courier 1.3 Auto, Universal, P.A.S., 1 owner, 6,000 miles	£7,995
1997 R Fiat Fiorino Diesel, Universal Mob, 1 owner, 30,000 miles	£5,250
1997 P Serena Diesel, Brotherwood, 1 owner, 11,000 miles, SLX	£9,995
1996 P Trafic LWB, hi-top, day camper, tail lift, 19,000 miles	£9,500
1996 P Vauxhall Combo Chairman	£6,495
1996 N Transit, Semi Hi Roof, Tail lift, 24,000 miles	£7,995
1996 N Transit Diesel, Semi Hi Roof, Tail lift, 15,000 miles	£8,495
1993 K Escort Chairman, 45,000 miles, lowering suspension	£4,995
1991 J Transit Auto Camper, Hi top, tail lift, 41,000 miles	£7,500
Kangoo & Berlingo models	Choice of 6
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A selection of 40 WAVs from £2,750 fully serviced with warranty. Demo and delivery anywhere in UK mainland free. Part exchange and vehicles sought for purchase.

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Mercedes Vito 108Cdi, 2001 '01, 6K miles, Orchid Green WAV, lowered floor at rear entrance with ramp.	£17,495
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VW Sharan S Tdi, 1999, V Red, 15K miles, 5 seater with lowered floor at rear & fixed ramp.	£15,195
Range of Kangoo's including ex demonstrators. All with full Lowered Floor Conversion.	Price from £7,995
Ford Courier 1.3P, 1992 K, 47K miles, lowered floor conversion.	£3,595
Ford Escort 1.4P, blue, 1987 E, Gowrings WAV with lowering suspension.	£3,495
Nissan Vanette 1.5P, blue, 67K miles, 1993 K WAV with 2 rear seats.	£2,995

All the above vehicles come with our Comprehensive Used Vehicle Warranty

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• Courses

Free Business Development Training for Visually Impaired People

As a result of European Social Funding (ESF), the organisation Workbridge has been able to deliver business development and marketing training for the visually impaired. Of the two year programmes running, there are opportunities to attend the two remaining training courses commencing: **Wednesday 5 February 2003 & Monday 31 March 2003.**

Places are available to visually impaired people considering self employment or already in business who are based in London or the South East.
Please contact Barbara Morton (Action for Blind People) on 020 7635 4979. E-mail: Barbara_m@afbp.org

• Services



• Contracts & Tenders

Expression of Interest for the Provision of Services for People with Physical Impairment.

Redcar and Cleveland, Middlesbrough and Darlington Borough Councils, jointly wish to improve and increase the range of services available to people with a physical impairment. By working together we hope to achieve a wider range of services according to local need.

The Service Options required include:

- Day Care and Outreach
- Habilitation, Enablement and Training Options
- Respite Care
- Short Breaks
- Supported Living Options
- Resource Service for Advice

Not all options are required in all areas

Expressions of interest are sought from organisations as development partners who can demonstrate experience in working within the social inclusion model of disability and who have an innovative approach to service delivery.

Interested organisations should apply for an expression of interest pack to, Rebecca Fewdale, 01642 771681, no later than Monday 13 January 2003.

The closing date for return of expression of interest is Monday 27 January 2003.

INVITATION TO TENDER

MARKETING AND DISABLED AUDIENCES: A GUIDE FOR THE ARTS

The Arts Council of England wishes to commission a guide which will help arts practitioners to market to disabled audiences and to develop audiences more effectively.

This guide will provide practical advice for anyone working in the arts, from people involved directly in marketing to those with responsibility for programming and presentation of the arts.

This guide will cover all aspects of marketing from the earliest stages of planning through to evaluation. It will be a practical resource, providing useful tips on marketing and promotion. It will also help practitioners develop on-going relationships with disabled audiences.

We are looking to appoint a consultant or consultants with an in-depth understanding of marketing, audience development and of issues surrounding disability.

The project brief is available by e-mail from michelle.murchan@arts council.org.uk or by telephone on 020 7973 6439. This information is available in other formats.

The deadline for receipt of tenders is 5pm on **Friday 31 January 2003**.

Interviews are likely to take place in the week commencing **10 February 2003**.

THE ARTS COUNCIL OF ENGLAND

RAMP FOR INVALID chair. Removed from VW Caravelle T4 which has only done 6k miles from new. Made to enter from side of T4. As new, complete with fittings. Cost over £1,000. Bargain at £450. Tel: 029 2076 4293.

SHOPRIDER WISPA SCOOTER with scooter, extended warranty plus insurance until March 2005. Easily dismantled for transportation and storage. Up to 4 mph, with a range of up to 10 miles per battery charge. Weight capacity between 14 and 15 stone. Lights, indicators and shopping basket. Cost £1,400. Hardly used, in excellent condition, asking £900. Tel: 020 8840 0380.

POWERTEC F50 POWERCHAIR. Old but reliable, serviced and well cared for. £400. Tel: 01275 463007 (Bristol).

MINI-JAZZER POWERCHAIR, ideal for indoor use, max range 25 miles. Right/left hand control, complete with batteries, charger. Hardly used. Cost £2,200 new, accept £1,000. Tel: 07711 138494 (Lincs).

VITESSE 2000 POWER in/outdoors wheelchair, right or left joystick control, dry batteries, kerb climbers, charger, comfort suspension, grey and chrome, puncture proof large rear wheels. Immaculate condition, can deliver Coventry area. £850. Tel: 024 7659 1279.

• Household/family

WILLOWBROOK ADJUSTABLE BED, 7 months old. With massage and cot sides. A cutout for a hoist. Cost £2,700, sell for £1,700 ono. Tel: 0131 654 0703.

Cont'd pg 40

Provision of Physical and Sensory Impairment Services - Best Value Consultation

The Council is conducting a Best Value review of its Physical and Sensory Impairment Services. In Bexley we work jointly with our partners in the Bexley Primary Care Trust, Queen Mary's Hospital NHS Trust and Voluntary Sector in providing services for people with physical and sensory impairments and their carers. In this spirit, our Health and Voluntary Partners are working closely with us in our Best Value review.

In accordance with the DETR Circular 10/1999, the Council wishes to invite comments from professional bodies and prospective service providers, both private and voluntary sector, on ways improvements can be made to these important and sensitive services. We would particularly like to hear your views on:

- service delivery options which actively involve service users in the management and provision of services and which seek to maximise independent living
- preferred method(s) of contracting/partnering
- length of contract
- staff development, training and how to maximise motivation and potential
- how you would seek to deliver continuous improvement of services throughout any contract term

For a copy of the service synopsis and the list of questions (available in paper copy or electronic format) please contact, either:

- ring Simon Leftley or Vinod Kumar on 020 8303 7777 ext 6503 & 6416 respectively
- email vinod.kumar@bexley.gov.uk
- visit www.bexley.gov.uk/e-proc

Please note that this is not an invitation to submit an expression of interest. Should the Council subsequently seek tenders, a further advert will be issued at a later date.

Located to the South East of London and within easy reach of the Capital and rural Kent, Bexley is a borough that combines the best of town and country. An innovative approach has underpinned our reputation as an efficient well managed authority with a strong commitment to customer care and employee development.

For further information about Bexley, visit our website: <http://www.bexley.gov.uk>





BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET

BULLETIN

Equalities Officers

(Up to Three Appointments) Grade J (£26493-£28827) - subject to regrading

Help us to make Bath & North East Somerset a better place to live, work and visit for all of our residents and employees. We are seeking up to three Equalities Officers to take the lead in promoting equality for all marginalised groups and for disability and race equality in particular.

You will be responsible for developing, co-ordinating and implementing innovative strategies and policies. We will also count on you to advise us on legal issues, best practice and innovation so our services are accessible to all.

If you:

- have a proven track record in Equalities of at least five years
- are educated to degree level and have knowledge of Local Government
- and can demonstrate sensitivity, leadership and the ability to network within and outside of organisations we want to hear from you.

We can offer you:

- a receptive environment where much good work has already started
- a superb opportunity to make a difference in a high profile and crucial area
- opportunities for further personal and professional development

For an information pack and application form please contact the Personnel Section, PO Box 3343, BA1 2ZH or telephone **(01225) 477995** (24 hours) quoting the job title and reference number.

Closing Date: **Monday 20 January 2003**

GRORUD STAIRLIFT, IN good order. Can be tested. £500. Tel: 020 8445 4303.

1 X DELUXE Relaxor Massage Mattress Topper. Size - 36" wide x 78" long x 3" thick. Full remote controls for all parts of body. Brand new, unopened. Wrong buy. Cost £660, accept £590 ono. Will pay delivery. Tel: 0121 459 4793.

• Wanted

DISABLED MAN 40 seeks volunteer nurse on frequent short trips, suit person without ties. Tel: 07879 068061.

WISPA HOIST. TEL: 01275 463007 (Bristol).

MEDESIGN BACKFRIEND. TEL: 01355 242187.

• Help

PA REQUIRED TO meet the personal care needs of active disabled East Leeds man. You will provide help at home, on outings and trade union meetings. £5.30 ph basic. Request application from Box no: 212.

• Donor wanted

2 DISABLED LESBIANS in happy, secure relationship seek reliable sperm donor to help us start a family. London area only. Box no: 213.

LINAGE ADVERTS

Due to lack of space on this issue, there is no linage form. To place a linage advert, please use the form in the December issue. Alternatively, contact Patrick Durham-Matthews: Tel: 020 7619 7320. E-mail: patrick.durhammatthews@scope.org.uk

THE INSTITUTE OF CANCER RESEARCH
(University of London)
Sutton, Surrey

STUDENT DISABILITY/ WELFARE OFFICER (14 HOURS PER WEEK)

Based within the Registry, the focus of this challenging new post will be the development of a quality support service to enable access for disabled students, both current and prospective, to the Institute of Cancer Research. You will lead the initiative to establish a resource and referral service, to raise awareness of disability issues amongst staff (including specific advice for those who supervise a disabled student), and to assist in the strengthening of the Institute's policy and procedure in this area.

The successful candidate will have a first degree (or equivalent) and a minimum of two years' experience of working in a University or similar education environment, one year of which will include working with students who have additional support needs. Strong inter-personal skills and well-developed communication skills are essential and applicants must have an understanding of the issues facing disabled students wishing to enter the Higher Education setting. Self motivation and the ability to work flexibly and co-operatively are important as are sound organisational and IT skills.

The post is offered on a two year fixed term contract initially with a starting salary of up to £9,551 per annum inclusive (pro rata to full time equivalent of £23,878 per annum inclusive).

To apply, please send **two copies** of your CV including the names and addresses of **two referees** to the HR Office, The Institute of Cancer Research, 123 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3RP quoting reference number **REG014** or via email to recruitment@icr.ac.uk. For a job description and person specification please visit our website at: www.icr.ac.uk/jobs.html. Alternatively you may call our 24 hour recruitment line on 020 7970 6061.

Closing date for applications:
11th January.

 The Institute
of Cancer Research

DEADLINES

February 2003 classified deadlines:
Booking: 10 January.
Copy: 14 January.

ASSOCIATION OF DISABLED PROFESSIONALS (ADP)

Part-time Administration and Development Officer working from home

Salary: £12,500pa for a 17.5hr week

Are you a person who:

- can communicate well, particularly with disabled people?
- can work well with others and on your own initiative?
- has experience of administration and development work?
- is a successful fundraiser?

If you can answer yes to all four questions and have enthusiasm for, and commitment to, removing of barriers within society that disabled people face, particularly in employment, you may be just the person we are looking for. We welcome applications from disabled people.

For a copy of the application form contact the Association of Disabled Professionals. Tel: 023 92 257672
E-Mail: AssDisProf@aol.com

Mail: 16 Aintree Drive Cowplain Hampshire PO7 8NG giving name, address and the format you need (standard, large print, disk, e-mail)

Closing date: 31st January 2003 Interviews: End February



ADP strives for equality of opportunity in all it does.

EAST HERTS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Human Resources Officer (Diversity)

Up to £26,995

The Human Resources Officer will need to demonstrate that they have had extensive experience of having covered all aspects of HR work and further demonstrate experience of having lead on a number of projects covering diversity including working with internal and external partners.

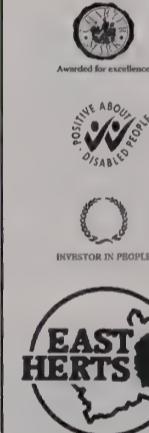
For this post a willingness to work as part of a team will be essential.

We offer a pleasant rural office location, easy access to Hertford town centre and shopping facilities. Other benefits include 24 days annual leave plus free car parking and contributory pension scheme.

Hours will be 37 per week however we offer flexible working arrangements.

To download an application pack visit our website on www.eastherts.gov.uk or contact Melissa Hull on 01279 655261 ext 514 quoting Ref. HR003. A minicom system is available on 01279 658578 for applicants with speech or hearing difficulties.

The closing date for receipt of completed application forms is 23 January 2003.



bayc

Youth Involvement & Accreditation
Part-Time Peer Support Worker
[Disabled Young People]
(18% hrs per week)

JNC Level 1 (points 2-5) (Unqualified)
Starting Salary £6098 (£12,195 pro rata)
(Post currently funded until March 2005)

bayc is looking for someone to provide peer support to disabled young people involved in Youth Achievement Awards, Action Research and other projects or voluntary activity supported by bayc. You will be able to motivate and encourage young people, have good communication skills and the ability to relate to a wide range of disabled young people from different communities. In return we can offer you the experience of being part of a professional field-work team and the opportunity to undertake accredited youth work training.

For further information and an application form, contact:
Carmela Billingham

bayc, 25 Spring Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2HJ

Company Limited by Guarantee No. 4347150

Registered Charity No. 1090789

Tel: 0121 440 1175 • Fax: 0121 440 1002 • E-mail: info@bayc.org

Closing date: 6th January 2003 • Interviews: w/c 13th January 2003



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

bayc is working towards equality of opportunity in employment and service delivery



Home Office
BUILDING A SAFE, JUST
AND TOLERANT SOCIETY

• Recruitment (on pages 38 to 42)

SITE OPERATIONS MANAGERS

With the leadership strengths, organisation skills and overt energy to get the best from these expanding operations

£30,000 - £40,000, bonus + car

Cornwall; South East England

Remploy is a unique business; a significant supplier to many world-class companies, it is also proud to be the UK's largest employer of disabled people. One of the most successful contributors to Remploy's £260 million revenues is the Healthcare and Textiles Division and the site in Cornwall produces a range of high quality garments. Through its partnership with Remploy Offiscope, the site also has a burgeoning contact centre operation, and this position will offer unusually positive and immediate career development opportunities. The operation in the South East is a Remploy Contract Services business that provides electronics/electro-mechanical assembly and supply chain management services to many world class businesses. Both sites have plans in place for further investment in IT and manufacturing technology, and output and revenue are expected to grow dramatically over the next year. Ideal candidates will be very strong people managers with experience of implementing operational change; they'll have an understanding of the need for tight cost controls and a track record of improving productivity. Above all, the jobs require the energy to motivate the entire workforce and the interpersonal skills to earn respect right across the organisation. Candidates must also be talented enough to make the most of the career prospects that success in these roles will open up. Please send full career details, quoting either reference WE2070 (Cornwall) or WE2071 (South East England) on both letter and envelope, to Simon O'Brien, Ward Executive Limited, 4-6 George Street, Richmond-upon-Thames, Surrey TW9 1JY (e-mail: so@wardexec.co.uk).

Remploy

WARD EXECUTIVE
LIMITED
Executive Search & Selection



South Devon Coalition of Disabled People - IT Project

We are looking for a highly motivated person to co-ordinate our new 3-year project enabling people with disabilities to access IT and Basic Skills training.

The successful candidate will be based at our office and computer suite in Torquay and will have responsibility for marketing the project, assessing individual clients training needs and meeting those needs in a wide variety of ways. The co-ordinator will also link with other training agencies and forums in the wider community and ensure the smooth transition of clients into other provision of their choice.

This is an exciting opportunity to support people with a wide range of disabilities to progress into mainstream opportunities. We are an Equal Opportunities employer, and will consider job share.

Hours - 37.5 per week for a 3-year period initially.
Salary - £17 000 - £20 800 pro rata.

Write for an application-pack to:
South Devon Coalition of Disabled People,
Lymington Road, Torquay, Devon. TQ1 4BW
or telephone 01803-215871.

Closing date for applications is 21st January 2003

COMMUNITY
FUND
Lottery money making a difference

CONDITIONS - Disability Now maintains the right to amend or withdraw lineage adverts without prior notice. All adverts must comply with the British Code of Advertising Practice.

Telephone numbers and addresses will not be placed in personal adverts, for confidentiality. Instead, Box numbers will be provided. Likewise, telephone numbers and addresses will not be given out over the telephone if requested.

Box Numbers can be requested for non-personal adverts. However, it may limit the response to it. If you want to advertise documents, goods or services contact Patrick Durham-Matthews (tel: 020 7619 7320), fax: 020 7619 7331.

Lineage adverts can only be used by private individuals. All commercial enquiries must be addressed to Richard Gresham (see contact details above).

DN cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage of adverts or letters during forwarding. It is the responsibility of the advertiser to check the content of their advert, and to ensure any abbreviations cannot be misunderstood.



BRENT ASSOCIATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE

Providing Services to disabled people in Brent since 1970

HAVE 2 VACANCIES FOR THE FOLLOWING:

WELFARE RIGHTS OFFICER

28-hrs per week. Salary Range S01 (£17932-£18979)

The person appointed will be:

- (a) Experienced in Disability Benefits and have ability to work to Tribunal Level.
- (b) Have comprehensive knowledge of the legislation that affects disabled people's benefits.

INFORMATION & ADVICE OFFICER

20-hrs per week. Salary Range Scale 6 (£11696-£12377)

The person appointed :-

- (a) Will have at least 2 years experience in Disability Information & Advice
- (b) Have experience of Information Technology (IT)

BADP supports the Social Model of Disability.

BADP is currently working towards including work-life-balance practices.

Closing Date for receipt of Applications:

5.00pm Friday 31st January 2003.

Further Information & an Application Pack available from:-

The Administrator, Brent Association of Disabled People, 154 Harlesden Road, London NW10 3RX.

Tel: 020-8451-3822 ext. 224. Minicom: 020-8451-3822 ext. 222.

Fax: 020-8451-7803. e-mail: badporg@btclick.com

Please state format required e.g. Large Print, Braille or disk.

• Personal

Find-A-Friend

Alone? Why? You needn't be!

Any adult, any age, anywhere
Able-bodied or Disabled
Single, bereaved, divorced, separated, partnered
or married - choose your own ideal relationship
to share all life's activities or needs of which you
feel you are deprived. Your solution begins with:

MUTUAL ESSENTIAL LINKS

1 Weir Street, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 5HL
Tel/Fax: Int' 00-44+ or UK (0)1606 49093

HOW TO REPLY

To reply to a personal ad
indicate the Box Number and
mark the envelope Private
and Confidential. If you do
not it will be opened. Send it
to DN, address on page 2.

PERSONAL ADS

For personal ads, submit
about 25 words and send a
cheque or postal order for £20
payable to **Disability Now** with
your ad. This is to help cover
our costs.

SEND US YOUR SMALLS...

...and make a big impression.
Small ads in DN reach over
70,000 people for just £7 a line.
All small ads must be paid for
in advance. If you want to
advertise, please use the form
provided. Send it with a
cheque for the total to
Disability Now, 6 Market Road,
London N7 9PW.

Registered charity no 208231

We are a national disability organisation whose focus is people with cerebral palsy. Our aim is that disabled people achieve equality: a society in which they are as valued and have the same human and civil rights as everyone else.



Administrative Assistant

£14,702 - £15,585 Incl LW

Scope, the UK's largest charity working with disabled people, exists to enable people with cerebral palsy and associated disabilities to claim their rights, lead fulfilling and rewarding lives and play a full part in society.

You will be based in our Research & Public Policy department, which has a staff of nine. It is a busy office which needs a person to assist the manager, keep the administration of the office running smoothly, and help keep track of the department's budgets. You will also be the first point of contact for enquiries.

You will need to be an organised person with good communication and keyboard skills (including ITC), an ability to get on with a range of people, a good basic education including numeracy, spoken and written English.

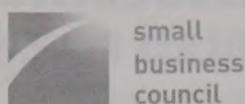
For further details and an application form, please contact Research & Public Policy department, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW. Telephone: 020 7619 7261. E-mail: angela.omahoney@scope.org.uk

Closing date for completed applications:
3rd February 2003. Interviews to be held on
Thursday 13th February 2003.

We are committed to equal opportunities and encourage applications from disabled people.

Find out more about us at www.scope.org.uk

• Recruitment (on pages 38 to 42)



A unique opportunity to advise Government about the needs of small businesses

We are seeking new members to join the Small Business Council and are keen to receive applications from readers of this paper.

The Small Business Council provides advice to the Government on the needs of existing and potential small and medium sized businesses.

Members of the Council are entrepreneurs from across the UK, who run their own businesses and work in many different sectors. We value diversity and welcome applications from people who are frequently underrepresented such as women, people from ethnic minorities, disabled people and young people. Further details of the work of the Small Business Council, including the last Annual Report can be found at www.sbs.gov.uk/organisation/sbc.asp

Applicants should note that they will be asked to give two days per month to the work of the Small Business Council. The post attracts a payment of £4,800pa.

Application forms can be obtained from: SBC Team, Kingsgate House, 66 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6SW.

Or e-mail sbcsecretariat@sbs.gsi.gov.uk

Completed application forms must be returned by Monday 20 January 2003.



Hackney Community Transport is a leading, dynamic and expanding transport and training provider in east London. Due to continued growth, we have vacancies for the following posts:

3 Booking Co-ordinators Ref: DN/BC
£20,000 - £22,000 per year plus 9.6% pension and free travel on bus and tube in London

Hackney Community Transport (HCT) is in the process of expanding the Transport Co-ordination Centre, one of a range of transport and training services offered by HCT.

The current expansion is a development in partnership with Transport for London to increase the transport provision for people with mobility needs in London by the utilisation of Private Hire Vehicles.

The Booking Co-ordinators will need to have excellent IT skills and verbal communication skills. The postholders will need to work under pressure and have the ability to meet deadlines. Weekend working will be required on a rota basis.

For an application form, please quote ref. number

Telephone Marion Waruguru on: 020 7275 2425

Closing date for completed application forms is 6 January 2003 at 5pm



DIAL-A-RIDE SHREWSBURY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT INITIATIVE

CO-ORDINATOR - We are looking for a dynamic person to co-ordinate the successful and vital work of this non profit making organisation which aims to provide a transport service for people unable to use ordinary buses operating within a ten mile radius of Shrewsbury. A person with either a qualification in the field of transport or appropriate experience is a requirement. Computer literacy, funding knowledge, and an awareness of disability issues, and empathy for working with volunteers, are vital. An interest in PR could prove useful.

Salary will be Scale AP6/SO1 - 37 hours week, normally between 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday. TOIL is acknowledged.

Application by letter and CV by January 31st 2003.

To: The Company Secretary, SCoTI Ltd, Unit One, Lancaster Road, Harlescott, Shrewsbury SY1 3LG.

COURSES

To advertise your vacancies

or courses please contact

Richard, tel: 020 7619 7336,

or Patrick, tel: 020 7619

7320, or contact them both

on fax: 020 7619 7331, mini-

com: 020 7619 7332. They

can go on the web as well!

Come check us out!

Putting people first and tailoring services to their needs

Creating access to the Built Environment

Building an Inclusive Society –

Promoting Equal Opportunities for all people in employment

You can locate our jobs bulletin on the Internet at:

www.salford.gov.uk/jobs/

Tel: 0161 909 6503

Minicom: 0161 909 6527



City of
Salford

Whizz-kidz

THE MOVEMENT FOR NON-MOBILE CHILDREN

Wheelchair Trainers

£15/hr

WHIZZ-KIDZ, the national children's charity, is looking for three consultant wheelchair trainers to lead pilot wheelchair training projects in London (April – May), Manchester (June – July) and Birmingham (September) in 2003. Each scheme runs over 7 Saturdays.

We are particularly keen to hear from competent wheelchair users, who have experience working with disabled children, a background in training and enthusiasm about helping to develop the new scheme.

Closing date: **20th January 2003**.

We are also looking for **volunteers** (manual and powered wheelchair users) in all three places.

For more details please contact: Sarah Jefkins, Whizz-Kidz, 1 Warwick Row, London, SW1E 5ER. Tel: 020 7233 6600
Email: keeponmoving@whizz-kidz.org.uk

Registered Charity Number 802872

Whizz-Kidz is committed to achieving equal opportunities in employment.

Chief Executive

The Association of National Specialist Providers (NATSPEC)

NATSPEC brings together the majority of the specialist colleges nationwide which make post-16 provision for learners with learning difficulties/disabilities. This well-respected Association, which has strong links with the Learning and Skills Council and DfES, has grown rapidly over recent years and at this pivotal moment in its development seeks to appoint a part-time (2 days pw) committed, experienced professional to lead the 68 Colleges in membership.

Closing date:

24th January 2003

Experience in an educational environment at a senior level is essential and knowledge of the FE sector, especially in the area of learning difficulties and/or disabilities would be an advantage.

The successful candidate is likely to be a strategic thinker, a strong leader and have excellent negotiating and interpersonal skills. This is an excellent opportunity for someone with credibility and vision.

The post is a part-time post, working equivalent to two days per week, and is based at home, although extensive travelling within the UK will be a feature. Flexibility regarding hours is essential.

Contract terms – 3 year renewable contract, well remunerated.

Full application details & further information are available from teato@portland.org.uk



THE ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL SPECIALIST PROVIDERS

GREAT SCOT!



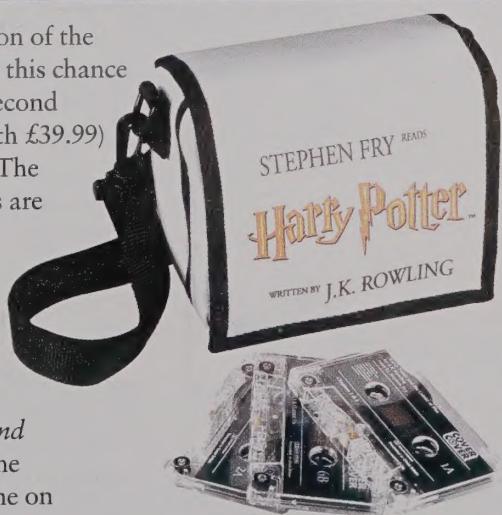
with special needs who wish to holiday with family, friends or carers. Features include a hoist in the main bedroom, bathrooms with a wheel-in shower area, height adjustable washbasins and clos-o-mat shower toilets. Many extra facilities are available on site including a garden room for lazy days and an unusual multi sensory adventure play area. There are many outdoor activities to fill your days at Royal Deeside, such as walking, golf and skiing and there are many castles and distilleries to visit within easy reach. The nearby highland villages of Ballater and Braemar offer a wide choice of shops and restaurants. For this great opportunity please complete and return the coupon provided on this page. Please note that the dates for this holiday are 24-31 March 2003. The prize includes flights, accommodation and transfers to and from Aberdeen airport. Crathie Opportunity Holidays recommends that guests hire a vehicle for their stay. For more information, tel: 013397 42100 or visit www.crathieholidays.org.uk



CRATHIE Opportunity Holidays

HOORAY FOR HARRY

From the BBC's widely acclaimed audio production of the Harry Potter books, we're delighted to offer you this chance to win *The Chamber of Secrets*, J K Rowling's second book in the series. There is a CD set for a winner (worth £39.99) and a cassette version for a runner-up (worth £23.99). The magical adventures of the young wizard and his friends are told in Stephen Fry's own captivating style, guaranteed to transport the listener into the thrilling world of Hogwarts School. What's more, both CD and cassette editions are packed into a neat Harry Potter travel bag, a great collector's item. For the chance to win, complete the coupon as shown on this page. You can order the travel bag containing *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* from all good bookshops, online at www.bbcshop.com, or the BBC Listener Enquiry Line on tel: 020 8433 2236.



BRENT-OSAURAS

BBC
the office
the complete first series



For many of us, Monday nights just aren't the same without our weekly dose of David Brent and his happy band of employees. If you have withdrawal symptoms and a video player, look no further, because we've got 10 copies of series one of BBC Two's award-winning comedy *The Office* for the taking this month. *The Office* is a brilliantly funny and scarily accurate portrayal of the white collar world. Shot in the style of a fly on the wall documentary, the camera is often on David Brent (Ricky Gervais) the unlikely general manager of a paper suppliers in Slough, whose tactless remarks and self-delusion never fail to make us cower and cringe. There's also Tim, the bored sales rep, who finds solace in his unrequited love for receptionist Dawn and his continuous taunting of colleague Gareth. The video features all the episodes from this first series on a single video volume (worth £15.99). For the chance to win this comedy classic complete the coupon as shown on this page. If you wish to order a copy of the video or DVD, visit www.bbcshop.com

to enter

Tick the competition circle below, add your details, and send FOR FREE to *Disability Now*, Freepost WD4323, London N7 9BR, or you can fax it on 020 7619 7331, or e-mail the details to: editor@disabilitynow.org.uk

Crathie Harry Potter The Office



terms & conditions

• closing date for entrants: 27.01.03. • Entrants must be over 18 • No proof of purchase required • UK entrants only • No cash alternatives • Winners notified by post • Editor's decision is final • Special offers not open to *DN* staff or associates • Winners may be announced in *DN* • In association with Crathie Opportunity Holidays, BBC Worldwide and BBC Cover to Cover. We may use your name and address for further marketing purposes. Please tick the box if you do not wish your details to be included

DN next month

Can you get romance while keeping your job? *DN* finds out next month.



All the best news, views, jobs and offers. On sale 27 January.

LOVE LIFE IN THE OFFICE

With Valentine's Day on the horizon, *DN* looks at relationships at work

MY VIEW

Katie Carty, winner of a RADAR People of the Year award, opens a new column written by young people

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DN updates you on the latest initiatives and advice

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Please deliver a copy of *Disability Now* to my home address

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Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Signature: _____

To the newsagent: *Disability Now*, ISSN 0958-4676, is published monthly by Scope, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW.

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great escape -
8 pages of holidays

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disabilitynow

£1.80 January 2003

Euro year

What's it all about?

Our house

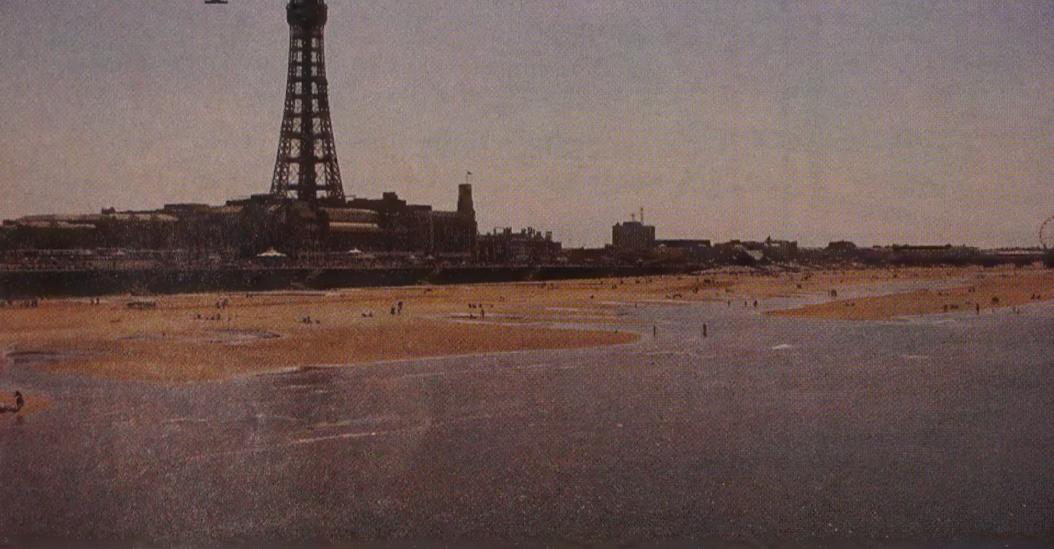
First parliament for
disabled people

Hot stuff

Recipes for success



BlackpoolGO



BrightonGO



BerlinGO

Citroen Berlingo 1.4i £12,470.00
fully converted*



For info on our full range:
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www.lewisreedgroup.co.uk
sales@lewisreedgroup.co.uk



You don't have to actually go to Berlin to enjoy the qualities of a Lewis Reed converted Citroen Berlingo. We suggest you tour some British towns first, then when you have toured the UK take an adventure into Europe.

Over 1,000 Lewis Reed Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle customers enjoy the flexibility and freedom that a Lewis Reed conversion offers. Request a brochure today and find out for yourself why nothing else will do.

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fully converted*

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because nothing else will do



Model shown for illustration purposes only. *Price excludes VAT (17.5%) and Road Fund Licence. Other models are available please visit our website www.lewisreedgroup.co.uk for further information. All prices correct at time of going to press. Errors and omissions excepted.



1972-2002
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